TURKEY AND THE EASTERN QUESTION

By JOHN MACDONALD, M.A.



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TURKEY AND THE EASTERN QUESTION

CHAPTER I

"THE grim, raw races springing and rushing forward in all directions frighten me a good deal." So Mr. Robert Lytton, the future Governor-General of India, wrote, fifty-two years ago, from the Embassy at Vienna to Mr. Motley the historian. And the diplomatist whose "routine business," as he frankly declared, filled him with "weariness and disgust," took, as an example of grimness and rawness, the reigning Prince of Servia, Milosh Obrenovitch, "a sort of small Ghenghiz Khan," "ex-pigdriver," with at least "twelve murders" on his conscience (supposing he had any). The Servian raw ones had emerged from the Turkish deluge. The Montenegrins, another "grim, raw race," never had been submerged. The Bulgars, perhaps the grimmest and rawest of them all, were still under water—though making efforts to rise to the surface. Incredible as it seems, the existence of a Bulgarian nation, the nation that, in a few weeks, has changed the map of Europe, was but barely recognised in Europe. There were Bulgars. Everybody knew that much. But not everybody knew that they possessed all the conditions—literary, religious, customary, historical, temperamental—of nationhood. A generation or so before Mr. Lytton's time, only a few scholars were cognisant of the fact that there existed a Bulgarian heroic poetry,

of a high order, unwritten, not unworthy of comparison with the Homeric lays. Still obsessed by his raw race nightmare, Mr. Lytton remarked that one might "as well pray to the Pope for the blessings of Protestantism as talk to the Austrian Government about interests of humanity, about repressing barbarism for the good of civilisation." Austria's frame of mind in the winter of 1912–13 shows some improvement upon the English diplomatist's picture.

Fifty-two years, and one morning in October 1912 a shot from the Black Mountain rings over Europe. A few days later, and the once "grim, raw races," rifles on shoulder, are tramping frontierwards. And Foreign Ministers hurry all over the Continent to "exchange views"—as they have been doing for a hundred years and more—about the possibility of reforming Turkey without "disturbing" the *status quo*. "There is something intensely dramatic in the spectacle" of the Slavic nations on the march, wrote the *Times* in one of its impressive leading articles, "a spectacle without complete parallel elsewhere." "Dramatic" also in its secrecy. Europe a cobwebbery of electric wires, a whispering gallery of telephones, and alert correspondents prowling about—yet no authentic tidings procurable. Now and again, however, a snippety "wire," like a lightning flash in the night, reveals what is going on. For example, the Turkish Minister, homeward bound, with his passports, from Sofia, is stopped at Philippopolis and forced to make his way across country to the sea coast, because, to His Excellency's astonishment, the railway trains are appropriated by the Bulgarian troops. Another glimpse—of great bands of armed Bulgarian peasants, vague as shadows in ghostland, converging, from all parts of the country, upon places of muster pre-arranged. If you know Bulgaria, you may imagine the spectacle—those stalwart, erect, dark-eyed, kindly-mannered, placid rustics in their sheepskin jackets, yellow leather sandals secured by straps cross-

wise over the white woollen coverings of their calves, passing by with their long, elastic stride. "They sang as they marched," a war correspondent remarked. The songs were, in all probability, songs of old-time combat with the Turk, songs in which the *haïdouk*, the patriot outlaw, is the hero, songs transmitted orally from generation to generation since the beginning of the Turkish oppression.

This sudden uprising of the Slavs and Greeks has had the immediate and significant effect of causing a revision of the popular conception of "Turkey" and the "Turks." For the first time, "the man in the street" has realised that "Turkey" is not in his sense of the word a nation, and that the "Turks" are, and never have been anything but, "an army of occupation." The frequent use of this expression, in the popular press, is a symptom of this change of view. To those who may have travelled in the Turk's dominions, the words will revive a familiar impression. The Turk among his Christian fellow-townsmen, whether musing in the tobacco-smoke of his café, or loitering in the busy market-place, gives one the impression of a sojourner in the land, unadaptable in it dreaming his atavistic dream of the wandering life.

Thirty years have passed since Professor Freeman exposed the deceptive character of such words as "Turkey," "State," "nation," "subject," "government," "representative," when applied to the rule of the Ottomans. "Turkey" was only fractionally Turkish; it was an inadherent mass of diverse nations, or fragments of nations four times as populous as the "army of occupation" to which they were subject; so that a Turkish ambassador represented the Turk only, never the subject peoples, whose one desire was to get rid of the "army of occupation." Freeman the hard-hitter would make short work of a Turkish ambassador who, at a European Conference, "instead of

being put in the criminal's dock," should "sit in judgment upon his victims." Every Turk, soldier or civilian, was one of the "army of occupation." He alone, of all the Sultan's subjects, was permitted to go about armed. Of the "army of occupation," conquest and tax-gathering have been the main business; it has shown no aptitude for any other; all the teachings of the Turk's European tutors for the last hundred years have been wasted; he was equipped, in the spiritual sphere, with a stereotyped dogma that made of its adherents a privileged people, forbidding any relation between the conquerors and the unconverted conquered, save that of master and servant—permitting, indeed, toleration, but more as a matter of grace than of human right.

Given a conquering caste of this description, placed among peoples that, though endowed with the mental, moral, and æsthetic qualities the invaders lacked, were weakened by rivalries among themselves, and the story of the Turks in Europe, from their landing at Gallipoli to this hour, evolves itself intelligibly, coherently, logically, inevitably.

We can see how unavoidable were all those massacres—from Chios and before it, to the Kotchana butchery, in the summer of 1912, which some weeks later made the Bulgarians spring to arms—how the Turk must massacre, or perish; how naturally it came about that the Turk conquests in Europe were to a great extent the achievement of the Turk's own victims; why the decline of the Turk Power began at the time it did (the last years of the seventeenth century); why "reforming" Sultans were either deposed or assassinated; why projects of reform that deceived a credulous, uninstructed Europe, not only never were introduced, but intensified the inherent tyranny—in a word, never could be introduced, so long as the Turk remained the Turk we have known in history.

CHAPTER II

WHAT were the "grim, raw races," and their political form, when the Turk first appeared among them? Greeks, Thracians, Illyrians (ancestors of the modern Albanians) were the earliest known inhabitants of the Balkan countries. Goths, Huns, Avars left little or no trace there. After them, early in the sixth century, the Slavs passed southwards across the Danube. In two centuries, they occupied the entire peninsula, from the Adriatic to the Euxine. In contact with the civilisation of Byzantium, they slowly outgrew their barbaric customs, and adopted the Christian religion. Their primitive paganism left its stamp upon the folk-lays and legends already mentioned. The curious (to a modern reader whimsical) intermingling of Christian with pagan beliefs and practices is a revelation of the inroads of Christianity upon the heathenism of the newcomers. For example, some nameless Slavic bard tells us how the three Fates sat with Mary by the cradle of the infant Christ, ordaining His destiny; and another, how the heathen genii punished Christians for neglect of the festival of the resurrection. These invaders were the forefathers not only of the modern Servians, Montenegrins, and (with a qualification which we shall presently indicate) of the Bulgarians, but also of the Bosnians, Herzegovinians, Croats, Dalmatians, Slovenes and other non-Germanic, non-Hungarian communities of the Dual Monarchy.

Next, in the seventh century, came the Bulgars, a Central Asiatic people, of kin with the Turk—both being of the Turanian stock; whereas the Slavs are Aryans. Long before their invasion of the Balkans they occupied an extensive territory on the Volga. The Greeks called them Voulgaroi, Oulgaroi, Boulgareis: "Volga-folk," as De Launay and Gibbon interpret the name Bulgarian. They had a bad name, worse even than the Huns'. To the Greek writers they were objects of loathing and

terror. They were hideous in body, bestial in their habits, and the most atrociously cruel of all the barbaric races that had felt the mysterious spell of "Golden Byzantium." Modern authors make liberal allowance for the exaggerations of cultured Greeks in presence of the rude race that for centuries menaced the very existence of the Empire. But a great change had passed over the Bulgar people before they became strong enough to imperil the seat of civilisation, or make their alliance welcome to the successors of the Cæsars. The Bulgars had ceased to be Bulgar. In less than three hundred years the Bulgars were absorbed, and converted to Christianity, by the Slavs they had conquered, and who were their superiors in civilisation. They gradually forgot their barbaric Turanian speech and adopted the Slavic in its stead. But the new nation thus formed took and retained the Bulgarian name. Bulgaria, therefore, is a Slavic country, and the Bulgarian language is sister to Russian and Servian. A curious transformation—yet analogous, in some respects, to the Gaulic absorption of the Frank Teutons, and the swallowing up of the Normans by the Anglo-Saxons. The interesting question has sometimes been asked—Why have the Turks never coalesced with other races as their Turanian kinsfolk, the Bulgars, have done? Is it that the Turkish mind was stereotyped by an exclusive, despotic religion of cast-iron dogma that regulated every act and concern of life, a religion that relegated the adherents of every other faith to a servile state; whereas the Bulgarian mind fell under the influence of a progressive, humane faith, capable of illimitable enlargement? What, it has been asked, would the modern Hungarians be, had their Magyar forefathers exchanged their heathenism for Mahometanism? There is no instance, it has been said, of a Mahometan people turning Christian. But, considering how readily certain classes of Christians in Bosnia and Albania turned Moslem when the Turk looked in upon them, and how lightly they have ever since regarded their religion,

the possibility of a return to, or compromise with, the humaner faith, under a civilised government, is quite conceivable. The subject has a close bearing upon the future of Albania, and of the remnants of the Turkish race in Europe—a question resumed in a subsequent page.

The baptism of Czar Boris, the first Christian ruler of Bulgaria, in the middle of the ninth century, marked a new epoch in the history of the Southern Slavs. In a quaint tale of the period, Boris is said to have been converted by fright at the Christian paintings of pagan tortures in hell. There were paintings of the kind. And when the Rhodope, "the little Switzerland" of the Balkans, becomes, as it will sooner or later, another "playground of Europe," the British tourist, contemplating the hideous pictures on the walls, inside and out, of the monastery of St. John of Rila, will understand how terrors of that nature may have impressed the barbarian imagination. But Boris's conversion—like Clovis's in an earlier age—was in the main political. It raised his prestige in a Græco-Roman world that, to his mind, owed its success to its worship of an omnipotent deity. With the convert's zeal, he exterminated those of his subjects who refused to be converted. Having become a Christian, Boris would establish a National Church of his own. This was the first step in a politico-ecclesiastical struggle that lasted until 1910, when, as related in a succeeding chapter, the Young Turks made an end of it, to the general satisfaction of both sides—Greek and Bulgarian. Boris's conversion did not quite make a new man of him. He put his son's eyes out, by way of paternal correction. There were atrocities in Bulgaria, perpetrated by Christian Bulgars, and Greeks, long before the Turks came. Besides the political motive for the rulers' conversion to Christianity, there was the religious motive, and the humanity, inculcated by the missionaries of the new faith. We may perhaps recognise in Boris's retirement to a monastery the effect his new religion had in arousing in him the feeling of

remorse. In the Slavic lays and ballads often mentioned in this little work, there are countless references to princes, to leaders of outlaw bands, who soothed their consciences and compounded for their misdeeds, by adopting the monastic life, and building churches. And, naturally, the greatest sinners were the most indefatigable builders.

It was Czar Simeon (892–927) who first raised the Macedonian question. He was the first Bulgar king who conquered the historic land that was as precious to the Greeks of the Empire as to the Turks of our own day. The historic claims of the Bulgars to Macedonia (we shall see that there was a Servian claim) dates from Czar Simeon. The sea coast, however, was left to the Hellenes, who then, as now, were almost its sole inhabitants. Czar Simeon pushed his conquests as far as Adrianople—the Thracian objective of Czar Ferdinand's invading army. After a battle in which he overcame the imperial forces, Czar Simeon cut off his enemies' noses and sent them to the Emperor Leo in Constantinople. Bulgarian morals and manners have been improved since then. Simeon assumed the full title of "Czar of the Bulgars and Autocrat of the Greeks." His successes aroused the Emperors to a sense of the real magnitude of the danger now threatening them. They saw the rise of a new people which, though known under different names and territorially separated, were ethnically and religiously one, and capable, if united, of raising a new Empire upon the ruins of the heritage of the Cæsars.

CHAPTER III

In 1912, the same people, united for the first time, are raising a new Power over the ruins of the House of Othman.

With Czar Samuel, half a century after Simeon's

death, there began what the Bulgarian historians regard as "the heroic age" of their race. Samuel's opponent was the Emperor Basil the Second, surnamed "the Bulgar-killer." Samuel reigned till 1014, Basil until 1025. The long combat between Greek and Bulgar was terrific, marked by the customary atrocities of the East. Basil, the Orthodox Christian, is said to have blinded fifteen thousand Bulgar captives; and if, as is also related, Samuel wept, and died of grief for their fate, it might not, perhaps, be doing him an injustice to surmise that under favourable conditions he himself would have taken a like vengeance. Victory swayed from side to side. For a time the Bulgar Czar made Macedonia—the prize of the Balkans—the centre of his kingdom. At Ochrida, one of the most beautiful spots in Europe, he founded a Bulgarian Patriarchate, in rivalry with the Greek Patriarchate in Constantinople. Prishtina, Veles, Kastoria, Prilip, and other towns now mentioned by the war correspondents, became Bulgarian. Towards the end of the tenth century, Bulgaria stretched as far as the Gulf of Corinth. It was during this long struggle that the Russians, who had already been taking a tentative part in Byzantine affairs, made their first definite intervention in "the Eastern Question." Basil called them in to help him in his war with the Bulgars. They came in as heathens, they went out as Christian converts—tying their idol-deity, Perune, to a horse's tail, by way of manifesting their sincerity. Among Basil's achievements in this see-saw of victory and defeat was the capture of Sofia. He recovered the Macedonian stronghold of Prilip, the home in aftertime of the Servo-Bulgar Marko. Confining the Bulgars to the western portion of their kingdom, he reconquered the Balkan countries, including Macedonia, and all the lands which the Bulgars had acquired to the south of it. Bulgaria became a protected State of the Empire—an "autonomous" State, in modern phraseology. But the Bulgar submission did not last long, and never was much more than nominal. About the end of the twelfth

century, the Bulgarians were again subduing Macedonia. A little later the Bulgarian Czar Kalojan annexed Uskub, the town which the Servian army has just captured.[1] From the time of Czar Simeon to the advent of the Turks, the Balkan States present a spectacle of kaleidoscopic shiftings—the Bulgarian, Servian, Byzantine colours spreading, receding, displacing each other. At one time the Servian colour shoots over the larger part of the Balkan peninsula. The Great Bulgaria of the Middle Ages was almost identical with the Bulgaria of the plan which Russia advocated at San Stefano, and which the European Powers rejected—to their lasting disgrace, and to the woe and misery of the Macedonians for another thirty-five years.

But in the Middle Ages there was also a Greater Servia. After the Bulgar Czar Azan's death, the Servians conquered Macedonia up to the borders of Thrace. With a change of names, the histories of Mediæval Servia and Bulgaria are much alike—with the difference, that the Servian Czars showed more aptitude for legislation of a civilising character. The Servian Empire reached its zenith in the reign of its heroic Czar Stephan Dushan, surnamed "the Throttler." This hero was one of the most ruthless despots of his time. He murdered his father. He was a prodigal builder of churches; they were the strangler's atonement for his many crimes. The "Great Servian idea" of modern times has its origin in Czar Dushan's conquests. Dushan is pre-eminently the hero of the Servian race. In or about the year 1346 he assumed the title of "Czar of Macedonia, Monarch of the Serbs, Greeks, and Bulgarians, and people of the western coast." Czar Dushan reigned in Uskub. The Servians in 1912 have marched against the Turks to the war-cry of "Czar Dushan," as they did in 1804, when their leader, Black George, King Peter's ancestor, started the first of the Balkan revolutions.

But as "the Throttler" has brought us almost within

[1] October 26, 1912.

sight of the battle of Kossovo—when the "Turkish night" of five hundred years set in—we may pause here, to give a brief account of the Ottoman Turks during that epoch.

The Ottoman Turks must be distinguished from the Seljuk Turks, who preceded them in the conquest of Western Asia. They must also be distinguished from the Semite Moslems of Asiatic "Turkey," who outnumber them by nearly three to one. In its bearing on the new phase of the Eastern Question now opening, this second distinction is a vital one. We shall return to it in a later chapter. The Seljuk Turks, first the servants and next the masters of the Saracen Caliphs, conquered Anatolia in the middle of the eleventh century. They were as intolerant of the Christians—whether inhabitants or pilgrims—as the Saracens were the reverse. Their only interest for us in this place is that by their maltreatment of the Christians they brought on the first Crusade—in other words the first European intervention in the Eastern Question—the first, at any rate, with which we need concern ourselves: Marathon, and Rome's struggle with Carthage, were incidents in the Eastern Question. It is curious to note how the Crusaders and the Greeks drove the Turks "back to Iconium," their first capital, on the western face of the Taurus range—the dividing wall, to this day, between the Turk Moslem and the Semite Moslem. "Your place is in Iconium," said Marshal Von der Goltz to his Turkish friends.[1] It was during the Mogul invasion of Asia Minor, historians say, that a horde of wandering Turks, searching for a home, had the good luck to save the Seljuk army from defeat. They were rewarded with lands. The old story was repeated. The guests became masters, but acknowledged, for a time, the overlordship of the Seljuk Sultans. Under Othman, or Osman, the new Turkish invaders finally supplanted their Seljuk kinsfolk as lords of Anatolia. In 1326 they fixed their capital at Broussa, on the Asiatic shore of

[1] After the Greek War of 1897.

the Marmora. From this Othman, or Osman, the new Turks derived their name of Ottomans, or Osmanlis.

It was under Othman's son and successor, Orkhan, that the Turk first landed in Europe. Just as the Caliphs had called in the Seljuks, so, in their wars with their own subjects, and with the Slav States, the Emperors invoked the aid of the Turks; and having come in, there the Turks remained. In 1356 they took possession of Gallipoli. Six years later they seized Adrianople, and made it their capital. In 1363 they won Philippopolis from the Bulgarians, who had some years earlier recaptured it from the Byzantines. In 1371 they conquered Macedonia.

For the effectual prosecution of their work in Europe the Turks carried with them an institution, one invented by themselves, an institution the most execrable in the world's history, and for its victims the most pathetically tragical. In the Islamic system "tribute" meant, to "unbelievers," ransom for their lives and properties, which were at the absolute disposal of the head of the "true believers," and an equivalent for the personal military service which all subjects were bound to render, but in which the "infidels" were deemed unworthy to participate. But Sultan Orkhan, who led the Turks into Europe, and who needed large armies, contrived, without violating the legal restriction, to turn Christians into soldiers. He did it by substituting for the monetary tribute a tribute in boys, to be brought up in the Mahometan religion and expressly trained for the army. Sultan Solyman is said to have circumcised forty thousand Christian boys in a single year. That was long after Orkhan's time. Gibbon describes the consecration of the young tribute-soldiers in the reign of Murad, Orkhan's successor. A holy dervish, standing in front of them, and stretching the sleeve of his robe over the foremost youth, blessed them in these words: "Let them be called Janissaries (*Yeni-cheri*, new soldiers); may their countenance be ever bright, their hand victorious, their sword keen; may their spears always

hang over the heads of their enemies, and wheresoever they go, may they return with a white (radiant) face." "Their enemies"! Their own kindred. The tribute-children had been taken away from home at an age too early for remembrance. The *Yeni-cheri* made the Ottoman armies invincible. We shall see how a change in their constitution was connected with the decay of the Empire. At the period we have reached there had been time enough for the creation of the terrible *Yeni-cheri* Order which Sultan Murad was mustering for the fateful 15th June 1389.

We have reached the period that, with the exception of the present, is the most momentous in Turkish history. If it be convenient to assign definite dates, this epoch may be said to have lasted from Czar Dushan's death in 1356 until 1465, twelve years after the capture of Constantinople. By the last-named year European Turkey had grown to an extent almost identical with its dimensions in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877–8. It was an epoch during which all the conditions of the Turks' success as conquerors (not merely as occupiers resting secure in their gains) had full play. Its history throws a curiously instructive light upon the Eastern Question of our own times. In the first place, military *organisation* gave the Turks as decisive an advantage as in the war of 1912 it has given to the allied States. Superiority in weapons was essentially included in the Turkish organisation then, as in that of their antagonists in 1912. Skilled manufacture provided the Janissaries with the best swords in existence. The Turkish Sultans outstripped the Greeks in the use of the newly-invented gunpowder. They were as eager to be up to date—and ahead of it—as Krupp's customers are, and Creusot's, in the twentieth century. The Turks possessed the only standing army on the European continent, and the flower of that army—the Janissaries, the Christian tribute-soldiers brought up as Moslems from childhood—were unsurpassed in the history of any nation. The rivalries of the Christian nations, jealousies among the

Slav people, gave the Turk an enormous advantage. There were "conversations," and "interchange of views," between "the Powers," then as now. Balkan Leagues were planned. There was even a *status quo* interval, with peace negotiations, at which "the Grand Turk's" Commissioners took part. M. Mijatovitch, late Servian Minister in London, and author of an excellent work on the fall of Constantinople, attributes the demoralisation of the Slav people at this epoch to their "monkish aristocracy," lords of a great part of the soil and its produce, ruthless in their treatment of the peasantry. This corrupt tyranny, says the same author, was an importation or imitation of "Byzantism." It resulted in the desertion of large numbers of men of the higher classes to the Turkish service, civil and military. They were, naturally, welcomed by the Turks, who were not a nation, but a conquering army needing recruits. For a time, also, the Turk treated the Slav peasants more leniently than their feudal lords did.

But it was in Central and Western Europe that the ecclesiastical discord produced the direst results. The schism between the Orthodox Church and the Roman led to the European desertion of the Slavic States at the time when the Turkish invasion could only be repelled by a united Christendom. In the history of Europe there is nothing more dreary than the diplomatic wrangling between Emperors, Popes, and Patriarchs over some "formula" by which Orthodox and Roman rites might be reconciled. Before the battle of Kossovo, many schemes of Slavic union against the Turks had been propounded, and forgotten. From the day when the Great Servian king, Czar Dushan, might have achieved the feat—which his death prevented—the Balkan nations had thirty-three years wherein to pull themselves together. Sigismund of Hungary made ready to join a Slavic federation. Dreading intervention from Central Europe, Sultan Murad promptly mobilised. Realising their danger, the Servians, Bul-

garians, Wallachians, Bosnians, Croatians mustered their forces at Kossovo. Theirs was the first great League of the Southern Slavs. It was incomplete, and belated. Five hundred and twenty-two years were to pass before the birth of the next.

CHAPTER IV

THE Servian armies have traversed the Kossovopolic [1] (Plain of the Blackbirds), the scene of the battle in which Czar Lazar, the chivalrous and the brave, last of the Great Servian kings, perished with his nobles and the greater portion of his army, on the 15th June 1389. The place-names of a land that once was the centre of a Servian Empire, the many lays about the battle, sung by folk-bards hundreds of years ago, are familiar to the youngest of King Peter's soldiers. In the forest and mountain combats between the Serb *haïdouks* (outlaws) and the Turks, in every insurrection, "Remember Kossovo," has through all the centuries been the Servian cry. Kossovo is the favourite theme of the Servian epic songs. Another Homer could have fused the Kossovo cycle, with its countless episodes, into a Slav Iliad. The list of chiefs—whose territories were dispersed far and wide—to whom Czar Lazar despatched his fiery-cross tidings of the Turk, may remind one of the Homeric catalogue of ships. The two Slav heroes, Milosh and Ivan, are the Slavic Achilles and Patroclus. Neither in the "tale of Troy divine," nor in any of the world's battle-songs, is there any description of single combat that for vivid realism excels that of the fight between the Ban Strahinya and the Turkish Captain Ali. It is a charming little picture, which the folk-bard paints, of the Ban's greyhound running after his solitary master, whom his kinsmen had refused to accompany

[1] October 22, 1912.

to the battlefield, jumping in delight round the Ban's horse, rattling his golden collar: well-trained Karaman, who stood by while the fight went on, and only rushed in, at his master's bidding, when the Turk took to foul play.

To the Servian army that stood with its back turned towards the Albanian hills—keeping the way open for the mountaineers who never came to the rescue, or came too late—Lazar's spies brought news of the fierce *Yeni-cheri* that were the pick of the Turkish host, and of the renegades who had betrayed their country and their faith for the Sultan's gold, and high place in Adrianople. Murad's hosts were countless as the leaves of the forest, said they. And Ivan, Achilles-Milosh's Patroclus, made the exceeding quaint report that, if Lazar's whole army were turned into salt, there would not be enough of it for one Turkish dinner. It would take fifteen days, said Ivan, to walk across the space filled by the Turkish host (which we can well believe, if the Turks needed all that quantity of salt). Their lances were as the winter woods when their leaves were shed: their standards as the clouds; their white tents as snow-covered plains. Then it was, according to one of many versions of the battle story, that Milosh vowed to make his way through the Turkish camp to Sultan Murad's tent, and kill him there. And Milosh's *pobratim* (sworn-brother-in-God) and their friend Milan went with him, against their better judgment, but in fidelity to their comrade, bravest of the Servians.

The Sultan and his courtiers, in their green tent, took them for deserters, or peradventure, emissaries of peace. Whatever their character, the priests who were present (fanatical as the *hodjas* of the Young Turk régime) advised Murad to treat them as Christian dogs. The *giaours* should not be permitted to kiss the hand of the Commander of the Faithful; they must kiss his foot. And as Milosh, meditating the swift spring he had designed to make, knelt down, Murad stretched forth his spurred boot. In a blaze of wrath, Milosh seized the

Sultan's feet, wrenched the legs asunder, plunged his dagger into his victim's belly, leaped upon his horse standing by the tent door, and with his two comrades, galloped through the camp. They were surrounded. Ivan and Milan were slain. Milosh, all wounds, was carried back to the Sultan's tent. According to this tradition, it was then that Murad ordered his army to join battle, expressing his hope that news of victory might reach him before he died.

We cannot attempt anything like a detailed description of the battle: how, all through the glaring summer day, the Servians alternately lost and won; how Lazar's chiefs, rushing into the Turkish throng, fell one after the other; how the Servians looked for signs of their belated allies, and saw none; how Brancovic's desertion, with his thousands of horsemen, simultaneously with the furious charge led by Bajazet, the Sultan's son, threw the Servian army into confusion; how Czar Lazar, although all was lost, hewed his way onwards, followed by his few nobles who were left, until they too perished; and how Czar Lazar, his horse killed, and he himself covered with wounds, was carried captive to the green tent where Milosh and Sultan Murad lay in their agony; how the Servians then broke and fled; and how the long-expected princes, pressing onwards to Kossovo, but still far distant, mourned and wept when they caught sight of the tell-tale river, the Sitnica, with its endless slow drift of dead men and horses, the same river which the Servians, driving Mahomet the Fifth's army before them, have crossed, shouting their war-cry, "Remember Kossovo." Turkish historians wrote that the "angels of heaven," amazed at the uproar of the battle, "forgot the heavenly hymns with which they always glorify God."

According to one version of the tale, Murad was stabbed on the battlefield, by a Servian soldier crawling from a heap of the dead among which the Sultan was lingering. The slayer, it is said, was sliced in pieces before the Sultan's eyes. In a different version, which

described the tent as the scene of the assassination, Milosh is sliced to death. But in a third the Turkish Sultan is depicted in the character of a chivalrous gentleman, in contrast with his vindictive son. In the Sultan's tent, Czar Lazar, Milosh, with other captive nobles, were sentenced to be beheaded. Milosh and the others asked for and received their Czar's blessing. The Sultan directed that when he himself expired, Czar Lazar's body should be buried beneath his feet, as a symbol of the perpetual servitude of the *rayah* (the Christians) to the Head of the True Believers. Then Milosh prayed the Sultan, "We twain, O Murad, are doomed: let enmity cease, let Czar Lazar rest by thy side, let me rest at his feet. I would serve him in the other world as I have done in this." And with his last breath, "the noble Sultan Murad" granted Milosh's prayer.

The fugitives from Kossovo betook them, some to "the German land," some to Bosnia and Albania, others to Montenegro. The principality of Zetta, which included Montenegro, and belonged formerly to the Servian Empire, was now ruled by a Servian prince. In the Black Mountain the fugitives were among a people of their own race. Bulgaria and Servia were left in a state of semi-independence. Regular annexation would come later. That always was the "Grand Turk's plan." "Golden Byzantium," the goal of the Turk, had to be won before the transformation of tributary States into provinces. The Christian States, Slavic and European, renewed their efforts for the creation of an anti-Turkish Union. The Emperor Manuel journeyed to Paris and London, for help against the enemies of Christendom. King Henry IV, says Hakluyt, met the Emperor on Blackheath and right royally entertained him. But France and England being at war, co-operation between them in the East was impracticable. In the years immediately preceding the capture of Constantinople, the Hungarians stood for whatever of vitality there was left in the Balkan League. Tired of

fighting, the Turks and their foes negotiated. The Turks desired leisure to consolidate their conquests, the Hungarians to organise a Christian combination. So in 1451, four years before the loss of Constantinople and the "Fall of the Roman Empire," the Turkish and Christian Commissioners met at Smederevo in Servia; and they discussed peace on "the basis of the *status quo*," and expressed the pious hope that the blessings thereof might last for ever. According to the histories of the period, Sultan Murad II, a most upright Turk, and generous withal, meant well. But in 1451 Murad died, and Mahomet II, a young man of splendid talent and boundless ambition—perhaps the greatest of the great Sultans—reigned in his stead.

Mahomet had been little more than a year on the throne, when he threw off the *status quo* disguise. His first act—the building of an arsenal on the European side of the Bosphorus, four miles from the Golden Horn—was a breach of faith and act of war. The locality lay within the Greek boundary. The Turkish annexations in the peninsula of which Adrianople was still the capital had left in Greek possession no more than a suburban fragment even smaller than that which the Bulgarians, when they came within reach of the Chataldja lines, left to the Turks.[1] Coveting this suburban site for its tactical value in the siege he was already planning, he seized it. Messengers from the rightful owner, the Emperor Constantine, humbly protested, and they reminded the Sultan of his solemn promises to respect the *status quo* recognised by his father. "My right is here," replied the Sultan, tapping his sword; "tell your master that if he dares send me any more envoys, I shall impale them." Lamentation in Constantinople! and the Emperor's couriers speeding to Rome, France, and England for succour! Like the Turks of 1912, the Constantinopolitans of 1453 knew that the loss of their city meant the destruction of the Empire. Feverishly they made ready for defence. The Emperor himself,

[1] October 31, 1912.

as all men knew, was resolved to perish sooner than yield.

As close to the city as the skin to the tissues, the famous fortifications of Constantinople consisted of an inner and outer wall, both of great height and thickness, running parallel to each other from the Marmora shore to the narrow gulf celebrated as "The Golden Horn." They formed the base of a triangle whose sides were washed by the Horn and the Sea of Marmora, and whose apex (known afterwards as Seraglio Point) jutted out into the Bosphorus. The base measured six miles, each of the two sides a little more. The two sides were protected by the sea. The double wall, whose ruins excite the modern tourist's wonder, protected the city from attack by land. The wall itself was defended, along its entire length, by a wide ditch a hundred feet deep. Constantinople was the most formidable fortress in Europe. It had baffled many a besieging army long before the Turks were first heard of, and since. With capable leadership, and adequate equipment in arms and stores, it should have been impregnable. But Mahomet well knew that Constantinople was deficient in all these respects, and that there was no risk of intervention by the European Powers.

The fortifications at which the Turkish defenders of Constantinople have rallied against their Bulgarian pursuers are twenty miles from the old walls. They consist of entrenchments and detached forts, distributed over a line of twenty miles, from a point near the Sea of Marmora to a point near the Euxine coast. The triangle which Nazim Pasha has been defending is seventeen times the size of the small, urban triangle which the Turks stormed four hundred and sixty years ago.

Mahomet II captured Constantinople because he had the best guns, the longest purse, and the largest army. He was the owner (a proud one, say the old chroniclers) of the Woolwich Infant of the period—the Adrianople Infant, we may call it. It was cast at Adrianople, in a factory specially built for the purpose. In his story

of the siege, Gibbon describes the monster gun. Its designer was a Christian "renegade"—Polish or Hungarian—who, on promise of a larger salary in Mahomet's service, forsook Constantine's. Civilisation, as represented by Constantine, was in sore financial straits, barbarism was rolling in money. Mahomet II gave Engineer Urban (so the historians name the "renegade") *carte blanche.* And Urban undertook to make a gun that would "demolish the walls of Babylon." Its muzzle measured three feet in diameter. On its first trial it shook, or shattered, every house within thirteen miles of Adrianople. It threw a two-ton boulder a mile and a half. Some hundreds of labourers, with a team of sixty oxen, spent two months in dragging the gun over the hundred and fifty miles from Adrianople to Constantinople. But, doubtless, the roads were then as bad as Czar Ferdinand's generals have found them. This first of the Infants had a serious defect. It took so long to cool that it could be fired no more than seven times a day. But the Turks had many batteries easier to handle and more rapid in business. So had the Greeks. But the Turkish artillery was the better of the two, just as in 1912 the Bulgarian artillery has proved itself superior to the Turkish. As regards numerical strength, a comparison may be made between the assailants of the Byzantine wall and the assailants of the Chataldja lines. Contemporary estimates of Mahomet's force range from 400,000 to 150,000 men. Later writers, sifting the original evidence, and attaching particular value to the Italian testimony, have come to the conclusion that the Turkish besiegers numbered from 170,000 to 200,000—about as many as General Savoff has hurled against the Chataldja lines. But who, or what, were Mahomed's 200,000? The answer reveals the great secret of Turkish conquest. A large proportion—some authorities say the larger proportion—the best element in the Turkish army, was not Turkish by race, but "Turkish" by utilitarian "conversion," or by the *devchourmé*—that is, the levy of

"tribute-children," from the Christian population, educated in the Moslem faith and trained for the army: the "tribute-children" famous, or infamous, under their name of *Yeni-cheri* (new soldiers), Janissaries. Greeks, Bulgars, Serbs, Macedonians, Bosnians, Albanians were overwhelmed, and their mental, moral, and material progress arrested for ages, by their own children! The inhuman device was essential to the progress of a Power that was nothing more than a conquering, or occupying, army living at its victims' expense. The Florentine writer Tetardi, an eye-witness of the capture, speaks of the large European element in the Turkish force. "Who have besieged the city?" wrote another eye-witness, the Archbishop of Chios. "Who have taught the Turks the military art, if not the Christians themselves? I have seen them with my own eyes, mixed with the Turks, storming the walls." And there was a fourth element in the Turkish force, the foul rabble of armed camp-followers and irregulars, the *Bashi-bazouks* of succeeding ages. But at the city's capture, regulars and irregulars took equal advantage of the Conqueror's proclamation—three days' pillage for the army, the buildings to be reserved as the Sultan's share of the booty. We can only make this passing reference to contemporary narratives of the massacres in the streets, and in the Cathedral of St. Sophia, where priests and people were praying the last Christian prayers to be heard there for many hundreds of years—the last for ever, as the victors boasted.

In the history of the human race, few are the scenes that move the imagination so profoundly as that which Constantinople and the Turkish camp presented on the evening of the 28th May 1453, the fifty-third night of the heroic defence, when, for the last time, the rays of the setting sun illumined the cross on the dome of St. Sophia. Constantine, the last of the Cæsars, and his soldiers, at their last service in the venerable cathedral in whose vast spaces there lingered the voices of the dead centuries. In his camp, Mahomet II, restless,

fretful, anxious, issuing his "order of the day"—attack before dawn, spoil for the survivors, the Paradise of the Koran for the slain. "Order of the day"! how tamely the words sound in our regimental routine! But Sultan Mahomet's was the knell of an epoch. The camp fires flickered out. Silence and a troubled sleep fell over camp and city. At "first cock-crow," say the annalists, the Turkish host sprang up; they compelled their irregulars to lead the assault; drove them with whips when they recoiled from the arrow showers, and the liquid "Greek fire" of which the defenders held the secret; drove them onwards until the chasm became clothed with their dead and dying, and the Janissaries trampled over them to scale the ramparts and force the gates.

A pious legend says that when the Janissaries burst into St. Sophia, a portion of the wall behind the altar miraculously opened, and that through the aperture the priest, who at that moment was celebrating the sacrament, vanished with his chalice—to appear again, and there renew the Christian worship, when the Turkish rule should itself pass away.

On the first Friday after the capture, standing high on a tower of the Cathedral, the *muezzin* shrilled forth his first summons to prayer: Mahomet II, kneeling on the spot from which the Christian altar had been removed, and turning his face in the direction of Mecca, performed his first public act of worship. And so, "the Turkish night," as the Slavic and Greek folk-poets named it, fell over the birthland of civilisation. A few years later, Servia, suffered to exist as a tributary State since Kossovo, became a Turkish province under Turkish Pashas. Bulgaria had already been annexed. In 1459 the same fate befell Albania. Bosnia, once the hope of the Balkanic Confederates, held out until 1465. Greece, the sacred land of art and letters, abandoned by the flower of her native population, became the prey of barbaric immigrants, and of Turkish Beys who, provided they supplied the Sultan with his "tribute," were

free to extort all they could from their helpless subjects. Alone among the Montenegrin rocks did the flame of liberty still live—a symbol of hope amidst the wreckage of the Slavic nations.

In this total eclipse of the Slavic day, the Bulgars, Serbs, Montenegrins, and the rest dreamt their pathetic dreams of sleeping heroes. The legends of Merlin asleep in Broceliande; of Arthur resting awhile in Avalon; of Barbarossa, and his steed, and his knights, all grown into stone in their cave in the Thuringer-wald, destined to spring into life at the stamp of the hero's warhorse; have their analogies in the Old Balkan tales. Czernoievic the Montenegrin sleeps in his grotto beneath Obod Castle, awaiting his summons for the rescue of Albania from the Turks. Czar Dushan, among the hills of Uskub, his ancient capital, awaits a like signal. It may be noted how the Servians have chosen Czar Stephan Dushan for their hero, instead of the heroic Lazar, slain at Kossovo. It was Stephan who raised Servia to the zenith of her power, and who, had his life been spared, might have federated the Greeks and the Slavs, and driven the Turks out of Europe. Marko is the Bulgar sleeping hero, although his stronghold, Prilip (now in possession of the Servian army) was in Old Servia. On a high plateau near the Iron Gates to the left of the river Vardar, Marko, say the Bulgar peasants of the region, is still living. *Marko, si ziv?* ("Marko, dost thou live?") cries the countryman journeying thereby. "Live," is ever the ready answer. The plateau is famous for its echo. In lonely places, the story goes, wayfarers have met Marko. There is a quaint tale of Marko's astonishment and distress when a peasant showed him how a village tailor, armed with a newfangled thing filled with a black powder, could outmatch the doughtiest archer or mailclad knight of the olden time. The wandering sleeper had sometimes been seen on the Ægean shore (which Czar Ferdinand's soldiers have at last reached). To the fortunate few who had speech of him, Marko gave assurance of his

coming reappearance on the earth, to lead his people against the oppressor. The oppressor has fled. The Sleeping Heroes may now sleep on for ever. But the legends will live long in the Slavic rustic's imagination.

CHAPTER V

Mahomet II is celebrated as "the Conqueror," though there were conquering Sultans after his time. But the conquest of Constantinople transcended every other. It established the Turkish Empire in Europe. The Empire remained almost intact until the defeat of the Turks before Vienna in 1683, by which time it had already shown symptoms of decay. The first of these symptoms was visible even as early as the reign of Selim II, who died in 1574. It is strange to think that, in that distant epoch, European observers were expecting the collapse of the Turkish Empire.

Among the secrets of a decadence which has taken three and a half centuries to run its course, were (1) deterioration in the character and habits of the Sultans, (2) the abolition of the *devchourmé* (the levying of Christian "tribute-children" for the army, in the form introduced early in the thirteenth century, and explained in the course of this narrative), and (3) the cessation of conquest. In an absolute despotism such as the Turkish, the ruler's character was a matter of infinitely more serious moment than it would be in the case of a constitutional State. Now, the earlier Sultans were men of strong character, exceptional ability, and immense personal energy, who when they had a thing to do, did it themselves. In spite of all their crimes, and of their Asiatic tendency to substitute the reign of caprice for the reign of law, they had a sense of justice. They were capable of generosity. Murad II, when invited to arbitrate between Constantine and a rival

claimant to the throne of Byzantium, decided in favour of Constantine, "because the throne is his by right," and although he well knew that Constantine was a Turcophobe and his rival a Turcophil. Murad could have settled the dispute by seizing Constantinople for himself—as his unscrupulous successor did. In religion the earlier Sultans were as tolerant as the leaders of the rival Christian sects and churches were the reverse. The Conqueror was a lover of art and literature. He was a Latin, Greek, Arabic, Persian scholar. But though the character and conduct of the earlier Sultans were in many ways admirable, the system they stood for was irreconcilable with what Europe understands by progress, by civilisation. It lacked the seeds of spiritual freedom and of the higher life, that were present even in the debased Christianity of the day. Their religious toleration was a form of contemptuous indulgence. Mahomet the Conqueror's fine accomplishments did not save him from perpetrating atrocities of the kind with which readers of Turkish history are familiar. He was the first Sultan who, to make his possession of the throne secure, put his brothers to death. It is a significant fact that, on his mother's side, this accomplished Sultan was an Albanian, and that he owed his education to his stepmother, a Christian lady.

The second and third causes may be considered together. Conquest was the Turk's one business in the world. When he ceased conquering, he became indolent, and demoralisation followed. The great Sultans were business men, their own Foreign Ministers, and Chiefs of Departments. They led their armies in war. They were men of the open air—splendid men, if barbaric. Their degenerate successors, reposing in their luxurious palaces, left the conduct of affairs to their favourites. The Sultans became invisible. Early in the seventeenth century, the levy of Christian "tribute-children," to be trained into Moslem warriors, came, as we have said, to an end, and although the Order of Janissaries lasted until its extermination by Mahomet

"the Reformer" early in the nineteenth century, it differed entirely from the *Yeni-cheri* of old; it was deadlier to its master the Sultan than to that master's enemies. No longer requisitioned for the Turkish army, the sons of the Christian families, remaining at home, became a source of strength to their subjugated kindred. The loss was the Turk's, the gain the Turk's victims. It is a remarkable fact that the first faint symptoms of returning life, of hope, of revolt on the Christian "herd," showed themselves after the abolition of the levy.

The intricate history of this period of decline is easily intelligible if one bears in mind the dominant fact that the Turks were not a conquering *nation* (like the English, who in India, Egypt, the Soudan, and elsewhere have brought a high civilisation to the task of elevating and purifying a low one), but a conquering *army* or Power inferior in civilisation to the races they subjugated and despised; needing a constant supply of recruits, as all armies do; indebted, for their success, more to their victims' quarrels and demoralisation than to any virtues of their own. The epoch of decline inevitably set in when the supply of recruits ceased, and the recoil of the waking, solidifying West upon the Near East commenced. The Janissary force lasted, as we have said, but as a close corporation, replenished from within, and more interested in the preservation of its privileges than in the stability of the State. The splendour of Turkey in the reign of Solyman "the Magnificent" was the iridescence of decay. In 1571, five years after Solyman's death, the Turks suffered their first great defeat at the naval fight of Lepanto. Though not disastrous to a *terrene* Power, it showed that the Turks were not invincible. But the repulse at Vienna in 1683, and Peter the Great's encroachments in the direction of the Sea of Azov and the Euxine, announced the beginning of the decline of Turkey in Europe. In their heyday, the Turks would not stoop to treat with their Unbeliever foes. A truce, or armistice, was their usual form of concession—or in-

dulgence. And the mere fact that the peace of Carlowitz, 1699, was ratified by the formal treaty of the name, was in itself a sign of failing strength. Signed in the last year of the seventeenth century, the treaty of Carlowitz introduced the era of formal, regular diplomacy. If a particular date must be assigned, it was then that "the Eastern Question," as understood in our day, had its birth. Then there began the Turkish retreat, which has now reached suburban Constantinople.

At this preliminary stage of "the Eastern Question," Austria, as one of our historians has expressed it, "started on her Eastern route." Russia and Austria had "the Eastern Question" all to themselves. Far and away the most momentous event in the history of the Question during the eighteenth century was the treaty of Kainardji, 1774. The treaty placed the Christians under Russia's special protection. Its diplomatically veiled assumption was that the Turkish Power was barbarous, unfit for uncontrolled rule over its Christian subjects. The treaty of Kainardji was as great an "insult" to the "dignity" of the Porte, as was Czar Ferdinand's manifesto in October 1912.

There is a moral gap between the Kainardji treaty and Czar Ferdinand's address. The Slavic States, with revived and progressive Greece as their ally, have gone to war primarily for the deliverance of an oppressed people. But the Austria and Russia of the eighteenth century were more inspired by reasons of State than by the enthusiasm of humanity. The "democratic age" was a long way ahead. So we find that in bargaining with the Turks those two Christian champions could abandon their protégés in their hour of need—Greeks, and Servians, and Bosnians. Yet the Russo-Austrian movement was as the dawn of a new day. The treaty of Kainardji, and the first appearance of the Russian fleet in the Ægean, kindled the first sparks of insurrection among the Servians and the Greeks.

How did the Turks adjust themselves to their new diplomatic environment? They had, as we have seen,

ceased to be conquerors. They were now on their defence, keeping a blood-stained grip upon the winnings of their swords. Despite superficial variations, the Turkish *tactique* has been one and the same, from the earliest phase of the Eastern Question to the war of 1912. The " reforms " which the Turkish Government began to proclaim from an early period of the eighteenth century onwards, admirable, enlightened, humane as they were, on paper, were doomed to failure. There were honest reformers among the Sultans. But Fate, as written in the Turkish character, was against them. There were reformers *à la Turque*, and others *à la Européenne.* Murad III (1594–6) was a reformer of the first kind. He attempted to replace the semi-feudal governors of districts under whom Christians and Moslems alike suffered, by imperial officials chosen by himself, and directly representing the central government. But the local despots, backed by the Janissaries, who would brook no change in the old régime, defeated his efforts. Osman II was a successful reformer—*à la Turque.* But he did no more than improve his tax-collecting and fighting machinery, and his Asiatic expeditions, together with his countless hangings and mutilations, testified to his energy. He wanted arms and money, and saw to it that his subordinates did not cheat him. That was *Turkish* reformation ; the despised Christian " herd " did not benefit by it. Mustapha III (1757–74) was the first Sultan to attempt reform on the European pattern. Death put an end to him and his schemes. Selim III repeated the experiment. Whereupon the Janissaries put the question to the ministerial representative of the Faith, " Has a Padishah whose reforms violate the *cheri* (religious law) any right to the throne ? " To a question put in that way there could be but one answer. Selim was assassinated. His successor, also a reformer, was deposed. Then there arose the most renowned of them all, Mahmoud " the Reformer." " Padishah Giaour " was the opprobrious name his Moslem subjects gave him. To the

vast mass of the Turkish people every reforming Sultan was a *Giaour*—the despised Christian's epithet. Strange to say, Mahmoud II died a natural death (1839). Mahmoud II may, not unfairly, be described as the first Young Turk.

For example, his programme of equality for all Turkish subjects, without regard to distinctions of race and religion, might have had the Young Turk revolutionary leaders of 1908 as its authors. However, it may be seen from the Reformer's plausible professions that what he meant by justice to the Christians was taking them under his personal protection. They were to be the objects of his "compassion." Mahmoud in person would have done justly by the *rayah*. But the governors of provinces stuck to the principle that "the Turk's business was to rule and the *rayah's* to obey." The same principle was frankly upheld by certain Turkish supporters of the Young Turk revolution. Moslem Turkey attributed the insurrections in Arabia, Syria, Greece, Epirus Servia, to Mahmoud's reforms. For the rest, Mahmoud was a reformer *à la Turque*, as in his extermination of the Janissaries, and Christian massacres at which civilisation shudders. Mahmoud's reforms were copied by his successors, Abdul Medjid, Abdul Aziz, Murad V, Abdul Hamid. Abdul Aziz even announced that the office of Grand Vizier would be open to the best man, Christian or Musalman. Merit alone was to be the test for appointments in the public service. Yet all these schemes proved utterly futile, and a Christian's testimony in the law-courts was of no avail against a Mahometan's. To civilise, to humanise, the Turkish administration, meant the destruction of the Turk's supremacy. The degradation of the races amidst which they were strangers was essential to the very existence of the Turks *as a dominant caste*. Either the Great Powers must overthrow the Turkish tyranny, or Lord Lytton's "grim, raw races" must do it themselves.

CHAPTER VI

WHAT were the "grim, raw races" doing all the centuries of the Turkish night? The Montenegrins were free. But their kindred in Bulgaria, Servia, and Bosnia were enslaved, all save the *haïdouks*, the outlawed patriots on the mountains and in the forests. The best type of *haïdouk* would be a compound of William Wallace and Robin Hood. The *haïdouk* it was who fought the Turk all through the dreary centuries. The *comitajis* of our own time, the Saraffofs, Tsoncheffs, Sandanskys, Dontcheffs, Deltcheffs, and a great many more captains of bands, not a few of whom have fallen to the Turk's bullet, or the assassin's knife, are the successors of the old *haïdouk* leaders. The patriot outlaw in the greenwood, the folk-bard among the peasantry, nourished their kindred's passion for freedom, and implacable hatred for the Turk. The outlaw and the bard were artificers of the Balkan Confederacy which, after four weeks' fighting, has just altered the map of Europe, and with it the Eastern Question. And so it happens that the heroic lays of the Slavs, in which the *haïdouk* is the foremost figure, are, even as history, worth libraries of "standard" treatises. As a picture of the rule of the barbarian over the civilised man these lays are unique in the world's literature. But though the outlaw was known, by repute, in foreign lands, the very existence of the folk-poetry that recorded his deeds was unsuspected until the last years of the eighteenth century, when a collection of Servian lays, then printed for the first time, from oral tradition, attracted the attention, and won the admiration, of Goethe and Herder. Many years later there appeared the first printed edition of Bulgarian folk-songs, collected from native reciters and strolling minstrels, to whom they had been handed down, by memory, from past generations. Nature-songs, songs of domestic life and custom,

religious songs, heroic ballads—the mass of them, still in course of publication, is enormous. Lays of great beauty there are in all these forms. But the epic ballads, of which the *haïdouk*, the Turk's relentless and eternal foe, is the hero, are the popular favourites.

While the diplomatists were spending the years in talk about "interests" and the *status quo*, the *haïdouks* in the Slavic lands, the Klephts in Greece, were sowing the revolution, and the heroic rhapsodist was their inseparable comrade.

It is a remarkable fact in the history of the Balkans, that the political revolt has in every instance been preceded, or accompanied, by a literary renaissance. The Servian revolt, the first of them all, broke out in a few years after the inception, by Servian scholars, of systematic research among the unwritten lays and legends of the folk. The leader of the first Servian insurrection was a *haïdouk*, outlawed patriot, "brigand"—in the Turk account of him—the pig-driver, Black George, ancestor of the King Peter whose armies have just driven the Turk out of Old Servia. The strolling minstrel, with his memorised stock of heroic ballads, was present in every rebel camp.

A flood of light is thrown upon the character of the Turkish rule over the *rayah* by the fact that when a man joined what the Turks called a "brigand" band, his Christian compatriots said that he had "rebelled." Rebel and robber were well-nigh synonymous. In hundreds of Bulgar-Macedonian songs, it is told how, for example, the father of a family, impoverished by an extortionate governor or corrupt judge, or the son of a widow whose household effects, "to her spinning wheel," had been seized, without payment, by the "Black Arnaut," betook him to the Old Balkan, the outlaw's "father," or to the "dear greenwood," his "compassionate mother," and there waylaid his village tyrant, or ambuscaded a treasure convoy on the road to Czarigrad (Constantinople). Or he may have fled to

escape torture, or false imprisonment, or because he slew a Turk who would marry his daughter. The Christian father who kills his daughter for wishing to marry a Turk, is sometimes celebrated in these popular songs. For the Christian who marries a Mahometan woman the penalty is death, even if the woman be a gipsy. Unrelenting hatred on both sides. These outlaw ballads of the *rayah* show scarcely a trace of the chivalry that is so often a charming feature of the Robin Hood lays. The Bulgarian Christian outlaw, whether pure and simple, or commonplace bandit, is as ruthless as any Turk. Each pays in the other's coin. And the seesaw of vengeance must go on while the Turkish supremacy endures. The folk-bards are quite frank. They draw a sharp distinction between the common robber and the true *haïdouk*, the "liberator," in the Bulgar lands, the "avenger of Kossovo" in the Serb country. The common robber is usually depicted in repellent colours, even if the Turkish oppression does account for his existence. But the other kind of outlaw is a dignified figure. His death is tragically pathetic, the common bandit's ignominious. And as the folk-bards spare not offenders of their own race, so they can do frank justice to an honest Turk.

An amusing instance of this sort of candour occurs in a long ballad about a certain Petko, a Bulgar-Macedonian villager, who journeyed to Constantinople, to beg the Sultan's permission for the building of a church. An old ballad, it is still one of the most popular in Macedonia. Petko was the *Clorbadji*, the headman of his Christian fellow-villagers. The folk-bard shows the Turkish Sultan in a most favourable light. "There is your Patriarch's palace, and further on is the Sultan's," is the watchman's reply to Petko's inquiries in the streets of Constantinople. Naturally, one would think, Petko would go straight to his Patriarch, the official spokesman for the Christian populations. (This was long before the Bulgars were granted an Exarchate of their own.)

But Petko knows better than look up the Patriarch. "His Holiness will squeeze me dry," thinks Petko. So he passes on and calls upon the Sultan. And the Sultan, having patiently listened to his petitioner, orders his secretary to write out a firman authorising Petko and the Christians of Vraja to build their church and worship God in their own way. The grateful Petko offers the Sultan a money gift. "Keep your money, O Petko of Vraja," says the Sultan. "I accept no presents; but when you build your church, you may engrave my name upon it." The name of the Commander of the Faithful on a Christian church! But it was a far cry from Vraja to Stamboul; and when Petko returned to Vraja the Turks of the place pounced upon him. However, he slipped through their fingers, by a series of divine interventions. And the Bulgar bard may have smiled over the ironic justice of his crowning miracle, whereby Petko's persecutors were turned into pillars of stone and carted off as building material for the new church.

Sometimes the Turkish terror takes a comic turn, as in the popular ballad of the five sportive young women whom their father-in-law sent afield to bind the corn. "Let us amuse ourselves," said the eldest. Which they did, till they grew tired and lay down to sleep. When they awoke the sun was going down, and they had done nothing. And, horror! there was the crusty father-in-law, trundling up with his waggon. "Leave him to me," said the eldest. "Oh!" she sighed piteously, "the Janissaries have been chasing us all day long. We have escaped with our lives. But you, too, are to blame. What possessed you, you silly old donkey, to sow your corn by the wayside?" The local despot (as in the Petko song), too remote for control by the just ruler in Constantinople, is a frequent subject in these popular songs. How often have not the Young Turk Committee in Salonika or Stamboul claimed the indulgence of their European critics, on the ground that the Government had not yet had the time to organise effective super-

vision over the local administrations? A folk-poet of the sixteenth or seventeenth century, returned from the dead to the Macedonia of 1903–12, would find that, some names excepted, nothing had been changed. He would haste him back to his grave, with his ancient load of grief for his people, and of hatred, implacable, for the Turk.

It will be readily understood that recitation of the heroic lays and legends would be an extremely dangerous pastime anywhere except in camps, in the outlaw's haunts among the hills and in the woods, or within one's "four walls." It is a favourite pastime, of an evening, among the Macedonian countryfolk, assembled at each other's houses. The singers are mostly women, many of whom have hundreds of lays stored in their memory. The writer has often been a privileged visitor at these house-parties of the Macedonian *rayah*, when the men and women, seated, in Eastern fashion, on the floor, in a wide ring round the ruddy hearth, sang or recited the heroic lays of their race. And some of these women were themselves in the *comitaji* society, gathering information, providing food and clothing for their rebel kindred in the Old Balkan, and shelter for fugitives. To hear a *comitaji* woman sing the terrific little ballad of the captive *haïdouk* and Buljuk Pasha, while the ring struck in at the last line of each stanza, was something to remember. The balladist relates how the Pasha threatened to hack off his captor's hands, tear his eyes out, and cut off his head; and how the patriot, with a defiant "Hack—tear—cut," cursed his hands for their trembling, his eyes for their misleading, his head for the failure of its device against his captor's life. One felt how, in the imagination of the singers, Buljuk Pasha typified the Turk, and the doomed outlaw the *rayah*. And there were Buljuk Pashas at that moment in Macedonia, as there had been for centuries. This was in 1903, the year of the massacres that gave rise to the intervention schemes, for the defeat of which the Young

Turks in 1908 precipitated their long-meditated revolution.

The story of the Macedonian *comitajis* is a romance that might delight the imagination of a Walter Scott. Now that they have joined the ranks of the invading armies, and that Macedonia is free, their occupation, we may hope, is gone for ever: for this little volume only an outline of their organisation is possible. Patriot-outlaws there were, ever since the Turk's advent. But in their character of a unified body with a territorial organisation, the *comitajis*, the "brigands" of the Turkish official reports, they date from 1894. Sofia was the Society's birthplace. Its first President was Professor Mikhailoffsky, an eloquent speaker. Its Vice-President was General Tsontcheff, a man of few words; curt, abrupt, pointed in speech; every inch a soldier. In order to prosecute his revolutionary work unhampered he had resigned his commission in the Bulgarian army. The Association's purpose was to liberate Macedonia through European intervention. Its leaders made no concealment of their determination to have recourse to arms, should diplomacy fail them. They formed local committees in every town and village of Bulgaria. People of all classes, from Cabinet Ministers to plough-boys, subscribed to the Society's funds. It was an open Society, perfectly legitimate, one with which the Government of a free country could not interfere.

The Sofia Society was known as the External Organisation, as distinguished from the Macedonian Society, known as the Internal Organisation, and founded by the two *comitaji* leaders (Voivodes), Boris Saraffof and George Deltcheff. "Diplomacy has ever betrayed us," said Saraffof to the present writer, who knew him well, "it always will; we must help ourselves. Our comrades in Bulgaria will know it some day, if they don't know it now." As a matter of fact, many of them were as well aware of it as Boris Saraffof himself. Boris the Mace-

donian, treacherously slain at the age of thirty-five, was the most romantic figure among the *comitajis* of our day. Hilarious, impulsive, racily fluent in speech, generous to a fault, something of a swaggerer—not from vanity, though he did love the apotheosis of a shoulder-high progress through the cheering crowds of Sofia, but from sheer joy of life—a born fighter, reckless of odds, such was Boris Saraffof. In physical appearance, slightly over middle height, brown-eyed, dark and shaggy-haired, erect, rather slim, with muscles of elastic steel. His amazing escapades in hill and forest fights, his feats in the art of disguise, would have made the fortune of a picaresque novelist. More than once, disguised as a travelling pedlar, or street hawker, had he loitered in a Turkish barracks, or camp, chaffering over his prices, slanging the Sultan's soldiers in their mother tongue, while orders were flying about for his capture, dead or alive. Modest, sparing of speech, gentle, unassuming, reflective, yet, when the die was cast, the bravest of the brave, such was Deltcheff, the chief organiser, the statesman, one may say, of the revolutionary movement, the idol of the Macedonian peasantry. He, also, perished in the bloom of manhood, but in battle with the Turk, at the head of his band, who died with him almost to a man.

The members of the Sofia organisation were, generally, in favour of annexing Macedonia. The Macedonians, on the other hand, stood for autonomy. But few advocated the division of the province between Bulgaria, Servia, and Greece. This divergence of opinion, however, mattered little. Both the organisations were agreed that their first, their imperative, duty was to liberate Macedonia. In the end the Macedonian organisation took the lead, with the entire sympathy of the Bulgarian people. The enthusiasm of the Bulgarian people's rush to arms, at the King's summons, is but the bursting of the dam behind which their compassion for their Macedonian kith and kin, and their detestation

for the oppressor, were accumulating during the *comitaji* period.

The Macedonian organisation was, of course, secret. Its full title was the "Organisation of Macedonia and Adrianople." For it must be borne in mind that the people of the Bulgar race outside Czar Ferdinand's kingdom constitutes the majority not only in the larger portion of Macedonia but also in Northern and North-eastern Thrace, where the Bulgarian armies have now been welcomed as deliverers. At the chief town of each of the ninety administrative sub-districts of Macedonia and Bulgarian Thrace, Deltcheff and his associates founded a revolutionary committee. Each of these primary committees had its delegate in the committee of the *sandjak*, or larger administrative area. The *sandjak* committees in their turn were represented in the organisations of their respective *vilayets* (provinces). A committee of five or six controlled the entire organisation. It had no fixed place of abode. One or more of its members might at any moment be anywhere between the Black Sea and the Albanian border. Communication between the leaders and the committees was kept up by couriers, selected, at critical times, for their skill in disguise and their linguistic versatility, as well as for their knowledge of every hole and corner in the country. They were bound by oath to secrecy, even in the event of capture. I know that, in the rising of 1903, torture failed to extort information from men who had been caught; and that one or two others, less confident in their powers of endurance, took poison. In the fighting organisation, betrayal was unknown. When it did happen—an extremely rare occurrence—it was among the sedentary population. The penalty was death, inflicted by a member of the organisation chosen by lot. Multitudes of people were flogged, or otherwise tortured, by local Turkish officials, for non-surrender of arms they did not possess, or for refusal of incriminating testimony against their guiltless neighbours. I came to know

hundreds of such victims, women, and youths of both sexes, as well as grown-up men, during an investigation I was conducting on behalf of a London journal. During the insurrectionary period we are considering there were more than a hundred *comitaji* bands fighting in Macedonia. Some of them were only twenty to thirty strong, others six hundred or more. Their total strength must have been nearly eight thousand. Results, while the Christian Powers were looking on, hundreds of villages burnt, the Turks catching on their bayonet-points or shooting down all who attempted to escape through the flames. There was nothing new in these horrors. They were a repetition of the Bulgarian atrocities in 1876–7, of the Cretan massacres, of Mahmoud the Reformer's crimes in Chios.

CHAPTER VII

The insurrection of 1903 was, partly, designed to compel intervention by the Great Powers. At that time the insurgents, as also the people and government of the Bulgarian kingdom, would have been satisfied with autonomy under Turkish suzerainty. As regards this solution of the Macedonian question (and it might have averted the disaster that has at last overtaken the Turks), the writer recollects the statement made to him by many prominent Macedonian Bulgars, that "if all Turkish governors were of the stamp of Hassan Pasha," the insurgents would disband of their own accord. Let the Sultan and the Powers, said they, make Hassan Pasha Viceroy of an autonomous Macedonia tributary to the Padishah. The Pasha, to whom the writer was introduced by the British Consul-General, Sir Alfred Billiotti, was at that time Governor of Salonika—a man of the most charming courtesy, frank and genial, a

fine old Turk in the grand style. The Bulgarian opinion of him I have already stated. What did His Excellency think of the Bulgarians? The conversation turned to the subject of Bulgarian character, when Hassan Pasha's manner instantly changed: "*une basse race*," he exclaimed slowly, with an expression of contempt in his frowning eyebrows and uplifted hands. Yet it is certain that, in the position the Macedonian Bulgars would have assigned him, His Excellency, in the measure of his knowledge and opportunity, would have treated them considerately, less, perhaps, from any principle of rightful equality, than from a feeling of compassion for inferior creatures. To misdeeds of local administrators, remote from supervision by their distant superiors, reference has been made in a preceding page. "You will discover for yourself," said His Excellency, when I took leave of him, "how false are all those rumours of cruelty in Macedonia." Had His Excellency himself gone to investigate, he would have discovered how little he knew of what was going on in his own province.

We shall now explain, briefly, the diplomatic ideas in vogue up to the insurrection of 1903, and what the projects were which, originating in the rebellion, precipitated the Young Turk revolution. Underlying the vast mass of the dreary diplomatic verbiage on the Eastern Question were two main ideas, utterly irreconcilable: the idea that the Turk was unfit for uncontrolled government over the subjugated races; and the idea of Turkey as a Great and Independent Power, whose "integrity," "dignity," &c., and right to conduct her domestic affairs in her own way, must be respected. The first idea was implicit in the treaty of Kainardji, already named. The second was explicit in the diplomatic winding up that followed the Crimean War. The Sultan's proclamation of equal rights, free careers, &c. &c., to all his subjects, without distinction of race and creed, gave it some semblance of justification. But (the old

story !) the Turkish schemes of 1856 and 1861 came to nothing, and the first of the two ideas was practically reaffirmed, when the Powers reminded the Porte that it must prove itself equal to its responsibilities as a Great Power, and were compelled to interfere with the Turkish administration in Crete, Armenia, and Syria

This wholly futile alternation between indulgence and remonstrance lasted until the Berlin Congress, 1878, when, as Professor Freeman writes, the subject of Turkish internal reform "entered definitely into international law." Europe made herself responsible for good government in Turkey. But, unfortunately, the Powers were not in accord as to the method of reforming Turkey. Some were in favour of a uniform system for the Empire (as if Turkey were or ever had been an Empire one and indivisible). This was the method of centralisation. Others advocated "autonomy," provincial home-rule, in accordance with local custom, under the Sultan's overlordship. Abdul profited by this divergence of opinion to play off one scheme against the other. The exhaustion of European Turkey would give certain Powers their opportunity to appropriate her spoils. Diplomatic fencing between foreign rivals for the Turk's possessions—such was, during this period, the sum and substance of the Eastern Question. To none had it occurred that the people directly and immediately interested in the fate of the Balkans might some day start up, thrust the talkers aside, and settle the business for themselves. And so the evils of Turkish rule remained unredressed. The Macedonian revolt was a last resource of despair.

The condition of Macedonia may be summed up thus: local governors, judges, military officers, soldiers, gendarmes, rural watchmen, compelled, by non-payment of their salaries, wages, and pay, to keep body and soul together by corrupt practices. That impecuniosity was at the bottom of the Macedonian disorder was the burden of Sir Alfred Billiotti's reports to his Government, and the

text of many a discourse with the present writer. There was much of the Turcophile in the amiable, accomplished, and universally popular British Consul-General. The soldiers of the needlessly large "escort" which the Turkish authorities assigned to the writer had received no pay for many months. The petty officer commanding them was in the same plight. Suspected of collusion with the Young Turks, he had just escaped transportation to Tripoli. Ambuscade of labourers homeward bound with their earnings was an offence of which the military riff-raff, the *Bashi-bazouks*, were often guilty. The hungry unpaid, whether *Bashi-bazouks*, or guardians of the peace and distributors of justice, "must live." During the search for arms, rifles, daggers, and revolvers were often restored secretly to their owners for cash down. Capitation taxes, complicated taxes on trades, on sheep, cattle, goats, horses, poultry, farm and garden produce, taxes for roads that were never begun, had impoverished the people.

Such was the state of Macedonia when the series of reforms was instituted that the revolution of July 1908 put an end to. They were to a large extent the result of King Edward's humane intervention. Timid and fragmentary, they were all that the King's diplomatic tact, great though that was, could extort. They gave the Turk his last chance. Yet the Turk frustrated them from the start. King Edward's visit to Austria in August 1903 (followed by a second visit in 1905, and a third in 1907) resulted in a programme according to which the reform of the gendarmerie should be instituted at once, the financial reform in 1905, the judicial reform in 1907, public works reform (roads especially) in 1909, and military reform in 1911. The Sultan rejected the project of a viceroyalty of Macedonia. There was no such country as Macedonia; there were only three large districts which the *giaour* "herd" had christened Macedonia! Nor was there a Bulgaria (so the Turkish envoy at the Berlin Congress

argued) until Russia and the other Powers manufactured one. (Old Turks argue in that fashion, to this hour.) Abdul had his way. An "Inspector-General" was appointed for the three *vilayets* which the *rayah* named Macedonia. European residents laughed, or looked grave, when they learnt that Hilmi Pasha was the Inspector. Two European Agents were to assist Hilmi Pasha. Abdul rejoiced when the Russo-Japanese war and the Morocco crisis diverted Europe's attention from Macedonia. The new Turkish gendarmerie, organised by European officers, did nothing, while Græco-Bulgarian riots, and fights with *comitaji* bands, went on as in the worst days. It needed a naval demonstration at Lemnos to compel the Porte's recognition of the financial Commission. "We are helpless, we can do no more than look on," said Colonel Verand, commandant of one of the gendarmerie districts, to the correspondent of the *Temps*. This was at the end of 1907. Even Hilmi admitted that during the fourteen months ending in the middle of that year, six hundred persons, including women and children, had been massacred. The foreign officers' reports showed that Hilmi's figures were far below the mark. Four years had passed, and not a single reform had been carried through. The patience of the European Powers was exhausted. The Italian Premier, Signor Tittoni, had already given his opinion in favour of provincial autonomy. King Edward's journey to Reval in the spring of 1908 was a last warning to unreformed Turkey.

The appointment of a Governor-General approved by the Powers, and irremovable without their consent, was, in the Young Turks' eyes, the first step to separation—in other words, to the break-up of the Turkish Empire in Europe. The Young Turks, with their splendid dream of a new Turkish Empire "one and indivisible" (an expression they borrowed from the French Revolution), took fright. They had no time to lose. On the 23rd July 1908, three months after the

Reval meeting, Major Niazi Bey's mutiny, with his two hundred men, at Resna, a small town fifteen miles from Monastir, gave the revolutionary signal.

A foolhardy freak, it seemed, at first sight, to the European public. But the mutineers were sure of their ground. The Resna outbreak was but the spark applied to a gunpowder train carefully prepared. The Young Turks had for many years, but with redoubled activity since 1903, been planting small organising committees of five to seven members each all over Macedonia, Albania, and Asia Minor. They had their secret emissaries in every garrison. Their readiest converts were the officers and the rank and file. Directing committees were established in Monastir, Smyrna, Adrianople, Salonika, and Constantinople. Placards headed "Death or Liberty," "The Nation and Liberty," "Freedom and the Constitution," and stuck on the house walls of Monastir, were the first symptoms of the coming rebellion. The Constitution was Abdul Hamid's stillborn Constitution of thirty years before. Other symptoms were assassination of the Sultan's spies and of military officers known to be hostile to the reformers. No sooner, therefore, had Niazi Bey proclaimed the insurrection than his little band was reinforced by hundreds of soldiers, townspeople, and countrypeople. Very many of them were officials in the public service. Niazi's march through Macedonia, setting "the heather on fire," was a triumphal progress.

Niazi Bey was a man whom all the Macedonians, Moslem or Christian, who knew him, regarded with a personal affection. He was a Macedonian, born at Resna, of which he was at this time the Municipal Chief. Educated at Resna and Monastir, he passed with distinction, and the rank of lieutenant, into a light infantry regiment of the Salonika Army Corps. Despatched to Constantinople, in charge of Greek prisoners, during the war of 1897, he gained, for the first time, a direct knowledge of the palace gang of highly-placed rogues

who were leading Abdul and the Empire to destruction. His prompt entry into the Young Turk organisation was the result. In a short time he was chosen as leader of the Monastir Committee. His military duties brought him into contact with the *comitaji* bands in 1903, and he did his best to exterminate them. *Comitajis* and Young Turks were alike the enemies of the Government, but their ultimate aims were different. On the day after Niazi gave the revolutionary signal, his intimate friend and colleague, Enver Bey, proclaimed the Constitution. This was at Salonika. Enver Bey, one of the most accomplished of the Young Turks, was educated in Germany. On the outbreak of the Italian war, he hurried from Berlin, where he held the post of Turkish Minister, to Tripoli, where he laboured, with all his might, to organise a Turco-Arab combination. But to return to Salonika: what amazed and terrified Abdul Hamid more than anything was the news that his trustworthy Anatolian troops, summoned to put down the rebellion, refused to march against their comrades. The Anatolian officers were Young Turks almost to a man. Telegrams from the Albanian Young Turks to the Sultan invited him to choose between war and the Constitution. The Sultan surrendered. Parliamentary Government, with free and equal voting power for all the nationalities of the Empire, was proclaimed from the throne. In Constantinople, Salonika, Monastir, Moslems and Christians, Turkish *hodjas* and exarchist priest and Orthodox clergy—in the churches and mosques, in the cafés, in the market places—were embracing each other, and weeping tears of joy over each other's shoulders. "Long live our Padishah"—*Pad'scha' chok yasha*—they all shouted. And from Asia Minor, Europe, and Africa, Abdul's exiles trooped into Constantinople, cheered by the populace, their rancour against the Padishah clean forgotten. Among the returning exiles —though not among the first arrivals—was the founder of the Young Turk revolutionary party of Union and

Progress, Ahmed Riza Bey, destined to be the first "Mr. Speaker" of the Ottoman Parliament.

It will be long before Riza Bey's associates forget their "tobacco parliaments" in the dingy little flat, in the somewhat dreary Place Monge, hard by the "Latin Quarter" of Paris, in which, during his long years of exile he planned the revolution, edited his little periodical the *Mechveret*, getting it smuggled, despite Abdul's spies, into every town, every regimental depot, in the Empire. To his Parisian friends, and to many of his compatriots resident in the French capital, he was "Riza the dreamer," "Riza the recluse," the student of philosophy, the disciple of Auguste Comte, never his best self except in the company of his literary and scientific cronies. His formula "Oh, non-Moslem Ottomans—Oh, Moslem Ottomans," contained, as in a nutshell, his political programme. The "dreamer's" ideal was the fusion of all the races of the Empire, Moslem and Christian, into a "new Nation," with a centralised government on the French model; a "New Ottoman Empire," formed by amalgamation of all the races, secured from European interference by its military strength. Achmet Riza's great scheme was far more thorough-going than any of the reforming Sultans' projects. But in the *Mechveret*, it was set forth only in the kind of general outline likely to commend itself to people who, whether Christian or Moslem, were equally the victims of Abdul Hamid's tyranny. As became a disciple of Auguste Comte, Ahmed Riza laid particular stress on the moral aspect of the Turkish Question. It is a notable fact that the founder of the "U. and P. Party," the new champion of Islam against the interloping Christian Powers, was neither a pure Turk by race, nor a believer in the Musalman faith. His mother was a highly accomplished German lady. Not a trace of the Turk is there in Riza Bey's fine, reflective face. Riza Bey's religion is the Religion of Humanity, as expounded by Auguste Comte in France, and after

him by Dr. Congreve and Mr. Frederic Harrison in England. But Riza Bey, just because he is a Positivist, reveres the Prophet, the great reformer of morals and religion; and he reveres the Koran just as any reveres a monument of literary genius. "Divine inspiration" has no place in Riza Bey's philosophy. But he maintains that for moral and religious edification the Koran surpasses all the sacred books of the world. He has often been heard to say that the Religion of Humanity and the Young Turk Constitution "are all in the Koran." As regards the "U. and P." idea of force in the correction of humanity, Riza Bey is not far wrong. Deeply as Riza Bey sympathised with the oppressed Christians, he sympathised still more with the oppressed Turks. He complained that Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bryce ignored the fact that the Musalmans needed protection no less urgently than the Christians. Riza Bey was right. The Turk suffered in silence. The Christian made his voice heard all over Europe.

The reader has already perceived the point at which Ahmed Riza the reformer must draw the line. Religion, said Riza, is "a matter for the individual conscience. We shall, as statesmen, place the Koran and the Bible on an equal footing. But in our reconstitution of the Ottoman Empire, administrative conformity must be absolute. Autonomy is treason; it means separation. Our Christian compatriots shall be Ottomanised citizens. We shall no longer be conquerors and slaves, but a new nation of freemen."

A lofty ambition. But a dream. M. Nelidoff, one of the most clear-sighted of European ambassadors, predicted that "twenty months of the Young Turk" would inflict more disasters on the Ottoman Power than "twenty years of Abdul Hamid." His prediction has been fulfilled to the letter. For it soon became manifest that the new Empire, just like the old, must rest upon physical force, and that the force must be Turkish—in other words, that the Turkish minority, in a total popu-

lation of about twenty-four millions, must rule the majority—must remain "Conquerors," as of old. The Young Turk idea of the "new nation" to be created was a nation in which the regulative, absorptive element would be Turkish. The Turkish element itself would undergo a disciplinary modification, morally and intellectually, with the lapse of time, but the resultant "Nation" would bear the Turkish impress. The Constitution, said Ahmed Riza, is immanent in the Koran. The Sheikh-ul-Islam (official representative of the faith) expressed exactly the same opinion. Enver Bey declared that the Koran contained no prohibition, direct or indirect, against the service of Christian soldiers in the armies of the true believers. Said Nazim Bey, the generous and the optimistic, "Give us thirty years of universal education, and we shall create our new Ottoman People." This was the same Nazim Bey who conducted his band of forty young Turkish bursars to Paris for training in the teaching profession.

But as the weeks slipped away, it became evident that the Christian races would not submit to absorption into an Ottoman Nirvana, and that the dominant race, the Osmanli "Conquerors," resented the notion of equality with the *rayah*, and the undermining, as they considered it, of their religious law. The Grand Vizier himself, Saïd Pasha, confessed his fears of an Old Turk reaction. Six months after the revolution the Greek Patriarch Joachim foresaw the outbreak of disorders worse than any in Abdul's time, and the rise of a Young Turk despotism as merciless as his. From the Young Turk postulate of a "new Turkish Nation," every despotic act of the Young Turks followed by logical necessity. Only by ceasing to be Turks could they realise their noble ideal, avoid violation of their abstract principles of equality. Dissensions soon arose among the Young Turks themselves. The great majority adhered to the Riza-ite—otherwise the "U. and P." committee's—principle of race fusion, with its rejection of any

scheme approaching autonomy. But there arose an active and intelligent party, the "Liberal Entente," otherwise the "Union and Liberty" party, that advocated provincial decentralisation, for educational purposes, local public works, and the administration of local finance; *provincial* decentralisation, be it remarked, not *ethnical*, for the "Liberal Entente" Young Turks were also Ottomanisers, imperialist unifiers, though not fusionists in the "U. and P." sense, the "extreme," the "Jacobin" sense, as it was designated. The founder of the "Liberal" Party was Prince Sabaheddin, another exile, Sultan Abdul's nephew, a young man of thirty or so, accomplished, a "society man," master of Parisian French, tumultuously fluent of speech, lively in gesture. Sabaheddin spoke of the Sultan as "that sly old fox, my uncle."

No less serious was the discontent aroused by the "U. and P." agents' manipulation of the parliamentary vote in every "doubtful" constituency. Under an absolutely free system the Turkish candidates would have been swamped. In that case, how would it fare with the ideal Turkish "Nation"? So the Turkish registrars erased the names of undesirable voters. By skilful delimitation of electoral areas, Turkish minorities were enabled to outvote the *rayah* majorities. In short, the Young Turk was exciting the indignation not only of the Christian, but also of the stereotyped Old Turk, who, though he bore a grudge against Abdul the Sultan, respected Abdul the Caliph. Riots and massacres were breaking out. Four months after the assembling of the Young Turk Parliament, a puppet Parliament controlled by the despotic "U. and P." Committee in Salonika, the Constantinople troops, with shouts of *cheriat* (the sacred law) effected their counter-revolution. The deputies vanished. Riza Bey himself escaped in disguise to a friend's house, in Stamboul, where he remained until the arrival of the Salonika relieving force, from Salonika, under the command of Shefket Pasha, the third hero of

the revolution. In little more than a week, four deputies from the restored Parliament—a Christian, a Jew, and two Turks—presented themselves before Abdul Hamid, with their Young Turk edict of deposition. A Christian and a Jew, the Christian handing that document to the Commander-of-the-Faithful, the Caliph of Islam! Did the two Musalmans shrink from the sacrilege? The scene might have spoiled the beatitude of the souls of Othman, Murad of Kossovo, Mahomet the Conqueror, Selim the Great, and Solyman, in the Paradise wherein they were believed to repose. And from Yildiz there departed, to his luxurious prison hard by Salonika, the last Sultan of the old order. You remember the legend of the monk and his chalice on the wall of St. Sophia. One may imagine him turning in his sleep, for the first time in five hundred years. But his hour had not yet come.

CHAPTER VIII

A "Macedonian victory," muttered the Old Turks, as they gazed on the illuminations in the new Sultan's honour. They had in mind the Bulgar-Macedonian contingent that had taken part in crushing the Hamidian counter-revolution. "I have kept my composure for the last thirty-three years," was Reschid Effendi's placid answer to the deputies who, having come to announce his election to the throne, asked him to be calm. For thirty-three years Reschid Effendi, Abdul's nephew, now Mehmet V, had been a prisoner in his palace. In an earlier age, he would have been put to death, with his brothers and other possible pretenders. Abdul Hamid treated his prisoner as kindly as was compatible with respect for a barbarous custom. Reschid was permitted to receive visitors, but his servants were spies. He loved music and gardening, and practised

both. He read much, chiefly in French, which he speaks and writes fluently. "Reschid Effendi," his uncle sometimes remarked, "is a happier man than I am." The prisoner was not allowed to pay visits. But he was free to drive through the city in a closed carriage, with guardsmen trotting at each door, and behind. Abdul's subjects feared to mention his name. Superstitious mothers believed that Reschid's was an "evil" eye, and when his carriage came along, they hurried their children out of the way, lest the prince should catch sight of them through the window blinds. In time the populace began to doubt whether Reschid was alive, or whether, like his other uncle, Murad V, he had gone out of his mind. Reschid's was a sound mind in a sound body. One secret of his good health was that he lived temperately and never worried himself. What with his reading, and his conversations with his visitors, he had acquired a wide knowledge of political Europe. He showed no elation when the parliamentary conclave formally declared him elected. To the courteous salutation, kindly smile, and paternal look of the new ruler, as he drove back from the assembly to the palace, the vast crowds responded with shouts of "Long live our Padishah," just as they had done twelve months before to the deposed monarch. Arrived at his palace, he held his first interview with the Ministers. It was as informal as a meeting of British vestrymen. How unlike uncle Abdul's ceremoniousness! Gone for ever the halo that surrounded the sacrosanct persons even of the worst of Othman's successors. The "Shadow of God" had become the shadow of a parliamentary wire-puller. Looking back through these three and a half years, a superstitious Turk might find it ominous that Mehmet V's first public act was a trip to Broussa, the capital of the Turks before they crossed over into Europe. And now, the newspapers are discussing the prospects of his retreat to that fair, tranquil home of his ancestors. It is an arresting figure, this half-phantasmal

Caliph, musing among the tombs of the House of Othman.

The foreign critics, who expected that the defeat of the counter-revolution would liberalise the administration, overlooked the fundamental fact that the revolution being, in reality, Turkish and Mahometan, the Turkish minority must either rule or perish. "For us to concede absolute equality," said the Young Turk leaders, "would be to commit suicide." The counter-revolution had opened the Young Turks' eyes to the imperative necessity of conciliating the Old Turks—in other words, the vast majority of the Turkish people: not all Riza Bey's Comtist "altruism," nor Nazim Bey's courageous philosophising of the Koran, could dispose of the contradiction between race equality and Turkish nationalism. There was, indeed, some plausibility in the argument that, during a transitional period, it would be the most prudent course to submit to the rule of the Turkish minority, especially as the Turks alone had any administrative experience, and while the Christian communities were still actuated by their ancient rivalries. But in that case, why proclaim the free and equal Constitution? Why not wait? At the very time that the revolutionary rejoicings were going on, and a Young Turk Deputation from Constantinople was fraternising with a deputation from Sofia, at Mustapha Pasha—through which Czar Ferdinand's hosts were to march some time later!—the Young Turk official organ, the *Tanin* (Echo), was publishing its ominous articles on conquering and subject races. The *rayah* must know his place! Salvation they shall have, but it must be through the superior man, the Turk. Brutal, but honest. And so the Young Turks were driven by the logic of things from one tyrannical act to another. We have twenty despots instead of one, the Macedonians, the Albanians, and the Syrians complained. The Young Turks were the "Continuators

of Abdul Hamid," a Turk Opposition leader wrote in the Paris press. They did more. They outdid Abdul Hamid. With all his terrific faults, Abdul Hamid had some respect for the privileges granted to the Christian "Nations" by his predecessors—for example, the right of the Christian bishops and clergy to assist at criminal prosecutions wherein Christians were accused, and of the chiefs of the Christian Churches to direct communication with the Sultan. These privileges the Young Turks must abolish, because of their violation of the Young Turk principle of the "new Nation one and indivisible." For the same reason the Bulgar, Servian, and Greek "Constitutional Clubs" in Macedonia were suppressed. Founded immediately after the revolution, the Bulgarian clubs in Macedonia gave a general support to the idea of an "Ottoman Empire" as distinguished from a "Turkicised" State. They were, in reality, educational clubs. They got up discussions on social questions of all sorts. But the "U. and P." Committee suspected them of conspiring for the annexation of Macedonia to the Bulgarian Czardom. They supposed them to be the *comitaji* committees in disguise—the same *comitaji* bands that, when the Constitution was proclaimed, laid down their arms of their own accord and returned to their villages. The dissolution of the clubs was a violation of the right of association, free speech, and meeting affirmed in the Constitution. Rights of domicile, liberty of the press, immunity from illegal arrest were set aside in every instance in which the Young Turk policy of unification seemed to be threatened.

The Young Turk idea was again set forth, in detail, at the Union and Progress Congress held at Salonika in 1910. It was resolved that none but Turks should be eligible for membership of the supreme committee. The resolution was equivalent to "Turkey for the Turks." The opinion of the Congress was unanimous, that all important posts in the military and civil services should

be reserved for members of the "U. and P." Party, and that Christians were undesirable in the gendarmerie. Bulgar, Serb, Greek, and Albanian "aspirations" whether for autonomy in any form, or for incorporation with the neighbouring kingdoms, must be "crushed." A motion for the abolition of the "Capitulations" (the historic right of jurisdiction by foreign representatives over their respective nationals) was applauded. By the teaching of the Turkish language in schools, by preferential selection of students from Turkish colleges, the transformation of non-Moslem into imperialist Ottomans would be expedited. It was announced at the Congress that the "U. and P." Party had nearly five thousand local committees scattered over the Empire. Finally, a considerable section of the Congress urged war upon Bulgaria, "the fomenter of Macedonian discord, which we must crush before we can hope for peace." Besides controlling the elections, those local committees backed the Directory's nominations for official posts, and founded Turkish schools for the propagation of the new Turk idea. From the Turkish point of view, this last enterprise was especially needful in Syria, where the people spoke Arabic, a language of which the Turkish administrators of the province were almost to a man ignorant. The Syrians, expecting the advent of a new heaven and a new earth, were sadly disillusioned. But more alarming than the growing discontent in Syria was the agitation which the language question, the attempted suppression of patriarchal custom, and Djavid Pasha's and Torghut Pasha's barbarities were exciting in Albania—the Western bulwark of the Ottoman Empire.

The loyal Albanians, first to hail the new order, were the first to rebel. The change of attitude had its comic aspect. In the early days of the new rule, the Young Turks had distributed large quantities of rifles among the Albanian frontiersmen, for self-defence against their Serb and Montenegrin neighbours. On the first

signs of Albanian discontent the Young Turks demanded immediate restitution of the rifles. In vain. That a Mahometan Government should persecute a people who were not only themselves Mahometan, but also the most steadfastly loyal to the Padishah, has surprised European readers. But, from the Young Turk point of view, there was no alternative. Successful resistance in Albania to the policy of denationalisation implied in the conception of a new "imperial Nation" "one and indivisible," would be imitated in other provinces. "Albania for the Albanians" became the cry in the "Savage Land" in little more than twelve months after the revolution. Isa Boletinatz, one of the most powerful of the North Albanian leaders, now a rebel, was one of the earliest of the Young Turk conspirators. Again, the patriarchal constitution of Albanian society, with its multiplicity of separate clans, had led foreign readers to under-rate the strength of the national sentiment. Thirdly, the religious sentiment is, and always has been, weaker in Albania than anywhere in the Ottoman dominions.

The Albanian population is estimated at one and three-quarters of a million. About three hundred thousand of them are Christians—Roman Catholic in the north, Orthodox Greek in the south. The Mahometan majority are the descendants of Christian Albanians who, to save their skins, when the Turks in the sixteenth century subdued the country, adopted the religion of their conquerors. But the Albanian Mahometan is so contemptuous of religious observance, that Turkish *hodjas* of the sterner sort have often denounced him as a "pig-eater." He does eat pork, he smokes, and drinks intoxicating liquors. Generally speaking, the Albanian Mahometan is anything but a "good churchman"—luckily, perhaps, for his country's future. The not uncommon practice of giving two names to Albanian children—a Christian name and a Mahometan one—is significant. The first point, then, to be borne in mind

is, that religious distinctions are not an obstacle to Albanian union.

We have now to consider the Albanian peculiarities in race. The Ghegs, as the Northern Albanians are named, still maintain the tribal organisation that existed among them many centuries before the advent of the Turks. The blood-feud, with its inherited obligation of vengeance, still exists, as it once did in the Scottish Highlands and as it still exists in Kurdistan and among the clans of the Indo-Afghan border. The Turks, caring only for their tribute and their supply of superb recruits for the army, left the Albanian customs and institutions almost untouched. The clan chiefs were the intermediaries through whom taxes were collected and justice administered. Turkish Pashas often attempted to set aside customary privilege, but when they did, insurrection followed. The "Savage Land" the Turks call Northern Albania, for its independent spirit, no less than for its inaccessible mountains. The Southern Albanians are far more advanced than their northern kinsfolk. The Albanians of Epirus have long been Hellenised. The Greek language is generally prevalent in South Albania—in Yannina, for example, as the mother tongue, and as an acquired speech in remoter localities, where the primitive Albanian also is universal. Even a Tosk ignorant of Greek will use Greek characters in writing his native Albanian. But whatever their differences in speech, and however conservative in ancient custom, the Albanians of the north and south recognise each other as brethren of the Skipetar race, an Aryan race, as distinct as the Slavs themselves from their Turanian conqueror, the Turk. Roman Catholic Albanians, Orthodox Albanians, are brothers, by blood, of their Moslem neighbours (who, as already said, are indifferent to religious formalism). To the Albanian the Turk always has been a "stranger," an armed tax-gatherer, just as he once was in Greece, Servia, and Bulgaria; a stranger, living almost entirely in barracks,

and as ignorant of the native language as any ordinary Albanian of Turkish.

The Albanian is proud of his race, attached to his native speech, uncouth though it sounds to Western ears. As long ago as 1879, the year after the liberation of Bulgaria, the Albanian feeling of race (stimulated by successful insurrections elsewhere) expressed itself in the form of a National League, not, be it remembered, for severance from the Empire, but for autonomy within it. For many years the League led a precarious existence. But it gradually grew in strength, largely through the liberal encouragement of prosperous Albanian business men living abroad. The fact that a fifth part of the population of the Hellenic kingdom was Albanian accounted in a great measure for the progress of the League. As in the case of the Servian, Greek, and Bulgarian agitations, the Albanian movement had, in part, and from the first, a literary character. Sultan Abdul Hamid discouraged the Albanian project of substituting a single alphabet—the Roman—for the Greek, Arabic, and Slavic characters in use. He was wide awake to the unifying virtue of a single alphabet. Four months after the revolution of July 1908, the Albanian Congress of Monastir voted the adoption of the Roman character. The Young Turks obstinately opposed it, as they did every project they deemed incompatible with their vast scheme of imperial unity. Should other resources fail, the Young Turks would inundate Albania and Macedonia with immigrants from their "homeland," Asia Minor. In 1910–11, Generals Djavid Pasha and Torghut Pasha carried on a war of extermination in Northern Albania. Torghut's atrocities were as savage as any on record. "Let them choke themselves to death like swine in a morass," was Torghut's exclamation, when he contrived to cut off some thousands of non-combatant North Albanian shepherds from their mountain homes, and penned them in the lowland swamps, to die of malaria and

starvation. "We do not want to have another Crete in Epirus," was the Young Turk warning to the Græco-Albanian agitators in that province.

And in the meanwhile, Albanian fugitives, chiefly women and children, were taking refuge in Montenegro —their old-time enemy, now their friend. King Nicolas's bill of £120,000 for relief to the Sultan's fugitive subjects, presented a year ago, never will be paid. Refusal of taxes all over Albania, early in 1912, led to countless combats, and renewed flight into the Black Mountain. Once more, as in the disastrous days after Kossovo, human wreckage from the Turkish storm was cast on the "rock-bound shore of Montenegro." And there followed constant skirmishes between the Montenegrins and the Turkish bands foraging in King Nicolas's territories or pursuing the Albanian refugees therein. In the middle of last August, King Nicolas mobilised a division. The Turks, with more than their usual alacrity, made haste with the repairs of their fortifications on the Montenegrin border, especially those at Tuzi and Scutari.

Thus, an Albanian-Montenegrin *entente* was the result of four years of Young Turk fusionist despotism. Montenegro's aim was the recovery of the territory conceded to her by the San Stefano Treaty (1878), but of which she was deprived by the Treaty of Berlin. Albania's demand was no longer Autonomy, but Independence. And during those four years of grace—the Young Turks' last—another *entente* equally fatal to the Young Turk ideal had grown up in Macedonia. The general condition of Macedonia during the years of grace before and after the July revolution has been sketched in preceding pages. But one subject, not yet mentioned, is of too interesting a character to be omitted. In the latter part of this critical period, the last remnants of the Phanariote, otherwise the Orthodox Greek, hegemony in the Balkan States came to an end. The early Sultans recognised the Greek Patriarch of

the Phanar (the Greek suburb of Constantinople) as the representative of all the Christian communities in the European provinces. The Greek Patriarch controlled education and public worship among them all. And naturally he propagated the Greek language and literature at the cost of every other. In the Slav-speaking places public worship was conducted in Greek. By a misuse of the name Greek, all Christians were regarded as Greeks. Greek bishops in Bulgaria and Servia prohibited the printing of the Scriptures in the Slavic tongues. They burnt libraries of Slavic MSS. The Phanariote despotism lasted until 1870, when the Sultan authorised the establishment of a separate Church, the Bulgarian Exarchate, with worship in the native tongue. The spread of the Exarchate among the Macedonian Bulgars caused the bitterest strife between them and the Greeks of the province, until, finally, in 1910 the ownership of some hundreds of disputed churches and schools was awarded on the basis of each Confession's numerical strength. For many years, Macedonian Bulgars of the Patriarchate Church had been passing over to the Exarchate Church, for, though both were alike in doctrine and ritual, the Exarchate symbolised Bulgarian Unity. The decline of the Patriarchate and the rise of Bulgarian nationality were correlated phenomena. The change was inevitable. Patriarch and Exarch were reconciled. The Macedonian Greeks ceased to speak of the "barbarous Bulgar." Bulgarian, Greek, and Servian bands, having ceased to fight each other, were ready to combine against the common enemy. The Turkish atrocities at Kochana aroused the war fever in Macedonia and Bulgaria. On the 1st October the Turkish and Balkan Governments issued their orders for mobilisation.

Seventeen days later, both sides—Montenegro excepted—declared war, Turkey anticipating the allies by a few hours. Montenegro had declared war on the 8th, captured Tuzi on the 14th, and marched on Scutari.

The European public were surprised—one might say amused—more than alarmed, by that sudden swoop from the Black Mountain eyrie. It was the general (not the universal) impression that King Nicolas had acted on his own responsibility, in which case peace between Turkey and the three other States might still be hoped for. During the earlier negotiations the allies would have been satisfied, so they said, with Macedonian autonomy, under a European Viceroy, with the Sultan as overlord, drawing his yearly "tribute." Their demand was also a self-denying ordinance, inasmuch as they repudiated all designs of territorial conquest. But the Turkish Government treated the demand as an insult. It would concede nothing more than "decentralised" administration by Turkish officials exclusively. The plan was a revival of the scheme formulated more than thirty years before, in accordance with an article of the Berlin Treaty. Nor was it inconsistent with the Young Turk idea of the one and indivisible Empire. Decentralisation *à la Turque* was one thing; decentralisation *à la Européenne* quite another, as abhorrent to the new Grand Vizier Kiamil Pasha as to the Union and Progress leaders whom he was impatient to put under lock and key. Mark this turn in the course of events. The "U. and P." Jacobins were, at last, beaten. But Kiamil and his colleagues were also Young Turks. Their ideal, also, was the organisation of all the races into a new Turkish People. European mediation, therefore, was as intolerable to Kiamil and the "Liberal Entente," otherwise "Union and Liberty" Party, as to Talaat Bey, the firebrand of the "U. and P." Jacobins. The reader must bear in mind this identity of main purpose between the two rival groups in the Young Turk movement.

But after more than a century's experience of reform *à la Turque*, how could anyone trust to the promises even of a Minister of Kiamil's high character and reputation? *Non possumus* on both sides. And still

the Sazonoffs and the Berchtholds talked benevolently about the possibility of combining internal reformation with due reverence for the *status quo.* "Balkan League? there's no such thing," M. Sazonoff is reported to have told the representative of a great French journal. Even M. Gueschoff, the Bulgarian Premier, professed to take a cheerful view of peace prospects, while Czar Ferdinand was preparing to start for headquarters, and when the Black Mountaineers were chasing the Turks to their shelter trenches at Scutari. And from Constantinople there came glowing accounts of the "splendid efficiency" of the Turkish army—especially of the Anatolians, "burning with hatred of the Bulgars," and impatience to make an end of them once and for all: the fortifications of Kirk-Kilisse and Adrianople had been perfected after General Von der Goltz's specifications; for "many months," the Turkish War Minister had been quietly making his preparations: the Bulgarians, if war there was to be, were in "for a disagreeable surprise."

CHAPTER IX

But there were at least two men whose prevision of "surprise" was quite otherwise. They were General Savoff, Commander-in-Chief of the Bulgarian army, and Czar Ferdinand. If the word genius be applicable to men of Von Moltke's type, the organiser of the modern Bulgarian army undoubtedly merits the title. This opinion military experts in the Near East have often expressed to the present writer. Twenty-seven years ago, when Alexander of Battenberg was Prince of Bulgaria, and Stambouloff her Dictator, young Lieutenant Savoff was marked out for distinction. Early in Prince Ferdinand's reign he became War Minister, his aptitude for organisation, and his brilliant performance

at the battle of Slivitzna (where the Bulgarians crushed their present allies the Servians), having established his claim to high promotion. Luckily for the young generation of Bulgarian officers, General Savoff held for some years the post of chief of the military academy at Sofia. Some few months before the Macedonian insurrection in 1903, General Savoff returned to his old post of War Minister. But for a new and urgent task in a new stage of the Eastern Question. Every "arm" of the service, every department, transport, commissariat, hospitals, field telegraphy, intelligence, and the rest, was strengthened or reformed from top to bottom. The huge task occupied him day and night for six years, when at last he could say that the Bulgarian army was "fit" for its impending business. This was early in 1908, when, as described in a preceding page, the Young Turks, alarmed at the threat of European intervention, and resolved to prevent any further "meddling" with the internal government of Turkey, hurried on their revolution. Savoff's greatest achievement was the institution of universal service—the "armed nation" —not, as every Bulgarian knew, for aggression, but for the nation's welfare, and the liberation of a kindred people, in the strife which all men felt to be near at hand. In no country has the sentiment of citizen-soldiership penetrated so widely and profoundly as in Bulgaria.

But if the Bulgarians are fortunate in their general Savoff, they are indebted to their Czar, the hierarchical Head of the Army. "Loyalty to him is fervent," writes a war correspondent. Banners bearing the inscription "Our Heroic King" "are carried in public processions." And yet, if one looks back to the Bulgaria of ten or twelve years ago, it cannot be said that he was then popular. The Bulgarians, a cautious, canny folk, were somewhat suspicious of him. The Sofia people, in particular, resented his cold, distant manner. For one thing, the Bulgarian nation had no voice in his

election. It was Stambouloff, the Dictator, who put him in the place of the kidnapped Alexander of Battenberg. Prince Waldemar of Denmark had refused the succession. The king-maker's emissaries, still on their travels in search of a king, were at their wits' end, when it was suggested to them that they might try Prince Ferdinand of Cobourg, then living in Vienna with his mother. This was in August, 1887. But a Prince of Bulgaria must be prepared for danger. He must of necessity make an enemy of the "Great White Czar," whose ambition it was to "protect" the principality. But "the Cobourger," as the sceptical Bulgarian folk called him for many a year—took the risks. Though only twenty-six years of age, Prince Ferdinand was a man of large experience. He had travelled over Europe and Western Asia, always with an inquisitive, receptive mind. He was a capital linguist. He was at home in every European Court. He was a keen student of history, politics, and economics. The first six or seven years of his reign might be described as a demonstration of his capacity to bide his time. Stambouloff was still the Dictator. Not until after M. Stambouloff's fall did Prince Ferdinand manifest his signal qualifications for the part he was destined to play in the transformation of the Near East. At the same time, the Bulgarian people began to discern, beneath their ruler's haughty demeanour, a character less unsympathetic than they had imagined. They grew reconciled to a pomp and ceremony more befitting—as many of them said—the court of old-time Versailles than the capital of a little upstart nation of rustics. The Prince's active interest in agriculture, local industries, and village schools made him a favourite with the country people—whose language he spoke fluently. But the army was the object of the Prince's most assiduous care. Not that the Prince showed any special aptitude for the rôle of a "War Lord." He was a clever diplomatist, with a sharp eye to the main chance. His military training as an officer

of Hussars in the Austrian Army was little more than the fashionable pastime of a wealthy prince overburdened with leisure. But he has known whom to trust. He is a judge of men. And the Czar's confidence in his Commander-in-Chief's ability, knowledge, self-devotion, judgment, and energy are as absolute as the great soldier's own confidence in the King's sympathy and quick appreciation of facts. The King's popularity, now so great, is largely due to his ceaselessly active interest in the army. It has often been said of him that he was ambitious of being famed in history as "Ferdinand the Macedonian." Why not? Somebody some day would have to liberate Macedonia. He bided his time. He resisted the popular impulse for war in 1903, when the army was unprepared, and in 1908, when the Balkan League was unborn.

But in October 1912, resistance, even had he desired it, was no longer possible. The Bulgarian people were to a man for war with the Turk. There was no noisy excitement in their determination. King and people were of one mind. As an indictment, on the ground of humanity, by a belligerent against his enemy, Czar Ferdinand's declaration of war and "Appeal" to the Bulgarian nation, is perhaps unique in history. Discarding the verbiage of diplomatic "correctitude," the declaration was a protest against the rule of the barbarian over the civilised man. The futility of trust in the Turks' promises of reformation—in his capacity to fulfil them, in the honesty of his professed desire to fulfil them—was the stark reality upon which the Bulgarian King based his appeal, addressed to Europe as well as to the Bulgarian people. "In the thirty-five years after our own liberation," ran the Appeal, "our brothers beyond the frontier have not been able to obtain a bearable life." Nor had they, for centuries. But the King was referring to the European abandonment of Macedonia in 1878, when she was once more thrown under the heel of the Turk. "All the efforts

to secure human rights" to the Macedonian people "have failed. . . . There remains for us no other means but war. . . . Our task is great, just, and sacred. . . . It is begun : it must be carried through."

The soldier's part in "carrying it through" is one of the most astonishing feats on record. In twelve days after the King's proclamation, the Turks lost the whole of Thrace, with the exception of a fragment twenty-five miles square, and the isolated garrison of Adrianople. In a month after the declaration, the liberation of Macedonia was completed by the surrender of Salonika: the Turkish forces in Macedonia were scattered to the four winds. Six days after the proclamation, the Bulgarians at Kirk-Kilisse, the Servians at Kumanovo, won their first crushing victories. Not the least striking feature of the war was the clock-like precision and simultaneity of the allies' movements, giving one the impression of a combined strategy carefully pre-arranged. Their rapidity would have delighted Napoleon himself. Leaving Scutari and the Montenegrins aside, there were three "objectives" upon which the allies had to march without a moment's unnecessary delay—the Bulgarians on Adrianople, the Servians on Uskub, the Greeks on Salonika. Within a few hours of each other the Bulgarians were surrounding Adrianople, and the Servians, hundreds of miles away, amidst the wild rejoicings of the people, were entering Uskub, the capital of the Old Servian Empire, where the great Czar Dushan reigned: the first Servian army seen there since the fourteenth century. Every day brought its tale of garrisons captured, Turkish forces dispersed, towns and villages welcoming, with acclamation, their deliverers. And by mid-November the seamen of the Greek fleet had landed in most of the Ægean islands. For rapidity, fiery valour, and coolly calculated strategy combined, the battle of Kirk-Kilisse (with its vast turning movement, to isolate Adrianople),

the terrible onslaughts at Lule Burgas and Chorlu (which gave the Bulgars the command of the southern railway line), will be remembered as long as South Slavic history lasts. But it was at Chorlu, according to the judgment of military experts, that the Bulgarians made their one great mistake. At Chorlu the Turkish army became a panic-struck "rabble," running for life to the Chataldja lines. Had the Bulgarians promptly followed, keeping the fugitives "on the run," as the military critics say, they could have cleared the Chataldja fortifications and marched to Constantinople, only twenty miles distant. But the Bulgarian commander, dreading a worse enemy than the Turk—the cholera—which the Anatolians had carried with them from Asia, halted in his victorious career. Constantinople was saved. Seizing his golden opportunity, Nazim Pasha, the Turkish Commander-in-Chief, strengthened the Chataldja lines, poured in reinforcements from Asia Minor, provisioned his famished troops, and organised the defence so effectually that the Turks, at the armistice they themselves had asked for, and which took place in the last days of November, became more exacting in their terms of peace.

As to the contributory causes of the allies' success, no estimate of them will be conclusive which leaves out of account the services of the Greek navy. In the newspaper records of the war, these have been generally overlooked. Yet it is no exaggeration to say that they have been invaluable. Without the co-operation of the Greek fleet the war would have been prolonged, greatly to the advantage of the Turks. The Greek seamen have done something more than occupy the islands. They have prevented the landing of Anatolian troops on the European shore, and to some extent even on the Marmora coast of Thrace. But for the Greek fleet the tale of Lule Burgas and Chorlu might have been very different. By stopping the sea transport of coal, the fleet starved the Turkish railways, and com-

pelled the Anatolian reinforcements to make their slow and painful way on foot.

To the causes of the Turkish disaster, in so far as they are attributable to the Turks themselves, only the briefest reference is possible. Foreign critics on the spot, competent and unprejudiced, are agreed that incoherence, ignorance, stupidity, indolence, lack of organisation have characterised the Turkish conduct of the war. Companies without officers, officers vainly searching for the men they had been appointed to command and had never seen; men dying of hunger within reach of abundant provisions—these have been the commonplaces of the correspondence from Thrace. Authentic details respecting official indifference to the most elementary of sanitary precautions, and to the sufferings of the sick and wounded, excite one's horror and disgust. Shefket Pasha's wonderful reorganisation of the army turned out to be imaginary. Yet the Turkish War Office had appropriated the lion's share of the public income every year since the revolution. Fortifications had been neglected. Inefficiency and incoherence everywhere. To many observers even before the war, it looked as if the Turks' foreign "instruction" had been wasted. Only the old-time dogged pluck and tenacity of the Turkish rank and file remained. The "Turkish myth," as a competent authority described it, was "dissipated." In war, his only trade, the Turk had broken down. Military critics, eyewitnesses of battles, declared that, man for man, the Bulgarian was more than a match for the Turk. It was the opinion formed years ago by the present writer, who may be pardoned this passing reminiscence. The Turk, said the correspondents, with an eye to Chataldja, is, behind entrenchments, a formidable antagonist. But so was the Egyptian *fellah* before Sirdar Kitchener made a real soldier of him. The supreme test is the bayonet charge. With the bayonet the Bulgarians were irresistible.

When, in mid-November, the Turkish Government decreed the arrest of the "U. and P." leaders, and offered to confer with the Bulgarians direct, M. Nelidoff's prediction of four years ago, quoted in a foregoing page, was fulfilled. The Young Turk had proved himself more fatally calamitous than Abdul Hamid himself to the Ottoman Empire. Many a time, since the beginning of the latest critical stage of the Eastern Question, have the Turks repeated a popular saying of theirs—"We have won it by the sword, the sword alone shall wrest it from us" (Bouchaklen alajaik—Bouchaklen verejeïs). Just when King Edward was paying his first visit to Austria and alarming the Sublime Porte with the spectre of autonomy, the Turkish Commissary at Sofia, Ali Ferukh, an honest Turk of the Turks, swore, to the writer of these lines, that for the sake of Macedonia every Turk would shed the "last drop" of his blood. "We shall!" said he, thumping his desk with his clenched fist. The sword had won Macedonia five centuries ago; the sword alone should wrest it from the warriors of Ali Ferukh's race.

But Macedonia is gone, and with it the Young Turks' fantastic dream of a "New Ottoman Nation, one and indivisible," born of the Moslem and Christian races interfused. At the time of my acquaintance with Ali Ferukh, Mr. (now Sir) F. Elliott was Consul-General at Sofia. "The Turkish Government is bad, very bad," said he to the present writer, in the course of a conversation on the Macedonian insurrection, "but it is difficult to know what to put in its place." That was the opinion of educated Europe. The Turk's expulsion from Europe would precipitate the dreaded scramble over his property: The "grim, raw races" were unfit to govern. So all the world honestly believed.

CHAPTER X

HAVING expelled the Turks, the Allies have opened a new Chapter in the history of the Eastern Question. It has brought Europe face to face with the problem of a permanent Balkanic Federation, of the antagonism between "the Slav and the Teuton," of Asiatic Turkey's future.

Taking the last named first—the Turkish power has reassumed its Asiatic character—its true character, but partially affected by the retention of Constantinople and a portion of Thrace. The reader will remember the warning of Von Moltke and of Von der Goltz—organiser of the Turkish army and designer of the Chataldja fortifications: "Your place is not in Europe: it is in Anatolia, at Iconium." How are they likely to prosper there? How will the change affect the European Powers? Marshal Von der Goltz takes a hopeful view of the Turk's future in Asia. At a meeting of the German Asiatic Society, in the last week of November, he said that Turkey had been "wasting her forces in Europe," that she would be "strengthened rather than weakened by the loss of Macedonia," that in Anatolia she would retrieve her disasters.

Before the Turk does that, he must cease to be the Turk the world has hitherto known him. Sixteen months ago (September 1911) Young Turk delegates were touring through Anatolia and Syria, preaching the Young Turk Golden Age, nursing the constituencies for the coming elections. The Anatolians were sulkily submissive, the Syrians inhospitable. A few days ago the Moslem inhabitants of Beyrout, the beautiful seaport of Syria, were showing signs of discontent. A little earlier, the Syrians of Alexandria were planning an anti-Turkish agitation. "Syria for the Syrians"

is part of the programme of a Young Arab party. In Asiatic Turkey many such straws have for years been blown about by winds from the Semite-Moslem world.

Now, in this so-called "Asiatic Turkey," the ambiguous label attached to the vast group of countries that lie between the Bosphorus, the Persian Gulf, and the portion of the Arabian coast which faces India, the Turk is as much "a stranger," a mere armed tax-gatherer, as he has been in Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria, Servia, and Greece. He is as distinct in race from the overwhelming majority in "Asiatic Turkey" as he is from the Slavs of the Near East. Anatolia, which is only a small portion of "Asiatic Turkey," is the only country in which the Turks are the majority. Anatolia they describe as their "homeland." Except in Anatolia, the Turks are merely an "army of occupation." In the Bagdad region their authority has never been generally acknowledged. In the Arabian peninsula they are utter "strangers," save in the Hedjaz, parts of Yemen, and a few isolated fortresses elsewhere. In "Asiatic Turkey," the Turkish rule is as detested as it is anywhere in the Near East. In "Asiatic Turkey," as in Europe, the Turk has lorded it over races of a higher type than his own. It is popularly supposed that in "Asiatic Turkey," Turk and Musalman are synonymous terms. There can be no greater mistake. Even among the Musalman populations, the Turks are a small minority. And with the Musalman non-Turkish majority, the Turk has been at strife for centuries. The distinction between Turkish Moslem and Semite, otherwise Arabian, Moslem, is vital. The Turks, to quote Professor Freeman, "have no claim to be placed side by side with the higher specimens of his own creed." The Turk Moslem lacks the literary, scientific, poetic, artistic tastes and capacities of the Semite Moslem. And though it be true that the earlier Saracens borrowed their philosophy and science from

the Greeks, they gave proof of their love of culture, their capacity for culture of a high order. But of their interest in the things of the mind, the Turks have scarcely manifested any sign. To this day, the Semite Moslem calls the Turk "a barbarian."

And the distinction is indicated geographically. The Taurus range partitions the Anatolian "homeland" from the huge expanse of the Semite Moslem land, which stretches to the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, and the Ocean. Bagdad, and Damascus the enchanting, are the capitals of this Arabian territory. The Turk is as great a "stranger" in Damascus as he was in Salonika, before his expulsion, the other day, from that gem of the Ægean.

In the blue and gold of an early morning some years ago, and in the course of a pilgrimage to Saladin's tomb at Damascus, my Arab friend and myself discoursed on the rule of the Turk. My friend frankly praised the achievements of the English in Egypt and India. What surprised me was his knowledge of a famous controversy that had arisen many years before on the subject of Musalman loyalty in India. To this subject I shall refer in another paragraph. My friend moralised, sorrowfully, on the contrast between the unhappiness and decay of his native Syria and the progress and contentment of the people of Egypt. He was one of the "Arab Party," about which there had already been some rumours. There is a "Young Arab" Party as there is (or was) a "Young Turk" Party. Leaving the Turk severely alone in his Anatolian "homeland" (where the Semite Moslem is rarely seen) the "Young Arabs" dream of an Arabian Empire composed of autonomous provinces, under the general rule, for civil and military purposes, of a Sultan and representative assembly established at Damascus. A Caliph, chosen from the Prophet's tribe and residing at Mecca, would be the spiritual head of the Arab Empire. It is a notable fact (to which M. Victor Berard has referred in

his *Revue* articles) that Turkish governors in Asiatic Turkey have sometimes recommended autonomy for Syria. It is supposed that Midhat Pasha's banishment to Mecca (and assassination there) was caused by Abdul Hamid's dread of the "separatism" implied in the ex-governor's scheme. In the "Young Arab" view, the Sultan is a foreign despot, who inherits his title of Caliph from Selim the Great, who usurped it four centuries ago.

My Damascus friend's allusion to the relations between his Indian co-religionists and the British Government—and just at the time of the public demonstrations in honour of the German Emperor's visit to the Syrian capital—are as applicable to the Eastern Question now as they were then. We hear, on the one hand, of Indian Mahometan discontent caused by the defeat of the Turks, and, on the other, of magnificent offers by the native princes of battleships and cruisers for imperial defence. At the head of these princes stands the Nizam of Hyderabad, a good Mahometan and ardent friend and admirer of the British *raj*. The Indian Musalmans' veneration of the Sultan-Caliph of "Roum" is but the vaguest of sentimentalities, if contrasted with their appreciation of the beneficence of British rule. This attitude of the Indian Mahometan population is an eloquent lesson to those who, like the German Chancellor, are labouring for the "reconciliation of races and religions in the Turkish East."[1] Many years ago, Sir William Hunter, the famous Indian civilian, provoked a protest from the Indian Mahometans, by the publication of his opinion that the Mahometans were bound by their religion to be the foes of the British Government. A question of merely abstract logic based on Koranic texts is not worth consideration in this place. But what was (and is) of the highest import, was the reply to Sir William Hunter's theory. Leading Indian

[1] Speech in the Reichstag, December 2, 1912.

Mahometans, their foremost compatriot, the Hon. Syud Ahmed Khan, at their head, promptly submitted the question to the doctors of the law in India and in other countries. The Mecca doctors replied, in their technical phraseology, that the "country of Hindustan," was "a country of the faith" (Dar-ul-Islam), inasmuch as the Mahometan religion was as free in India as in any Mahometan State; that as "the Faithful" were on a footing of equality with the English, they were bound by their religion to be loyal to the British Government. "This," added one of the Mecca doctors, "is written by one who hopes for salvation from the God of mercy." The Indian doctors declared that the English respected the faith as scrupulously as if they themselves were Mahometans; that, therefore, rebellion against the British Government would be "a crime," an "infamy," "deserving death." They published the documents in pamphlet form, and distributed them far and wide. As the testimony of a subject people to the character of its alien rule, the Indian declaration is unique in history. Syud Ahmed Khan, whom the Indian Moslems revered, was the principal founder of the Anglo-Mahometan College at Aligarh, a noble institution which it has recently been proposed to expand into a great university. During some years' residence in India, the writer of this volume had the privilege of intercourse with the Syud and his associates. It was a favourite saying of Syud Ahmed Khan's that India's "strongest bulwark" was the contentment and the prosperity of the people. The Indian Mahometans are content, are at peace with all the other races and followers of other creeds, because they are free, and economically progressive.

There, then, is the lesson for the Turks in Asia, at this new stage of their destiny. It will be noticed how, in the striking speech already mentioned, the German Minister lays stress on the economic side of the Eastern Question. His insistence upon it is the recognition of

a great change in the European view of the problem. "Economic interest" is the burden of hundreds of the Kaiser's speeches and miles of leading articles in the German press. The Young Turks themselves preached the economic reformation—but did nothing. And the Syrian discontent, and the renewal of Kurd-Armenian troubles are a matter of lively concern to Germany, whose "economic" interests in Anatolia are so considerable, and to Russia, the traditional protectress of the Christians. Roads, railways, irrigation, development of local industries, free trade—in these, by whatsoever power promoted, lies the salvation of Asiatic Turkey. British engineers have stated that the Tigris-Euphrates territories, now a desert, may be turned into a fruitful land capable of supporting fifty millions of inhabitants. With the rise of the economic question, the Eastern Question of tradition has to a great extent been either transformed or superseded. Strategical railways, along the Euphrates valley, through Persia, from Egypt to Persia through Northern Arabia, will occupy "the Chancelleries," but the economic will be the regulative interest. Every interest not economic is tending to become as antiquated as Napoleon's bargainings with Russia and Persia for a raid into India. Economic progress once established, the race conflicts of the Near and Middle East will become things of the past.

CHAPTER XI

THE settlement of the liberated provinces once effected, economic enterprise will become the absorbing interest of the Balkanic peoples. What thirty-four years of freedom have accomplished—physically, intellectually, socially—in Bulgaria, may be achieved within a like period by free Macedonia. Thirty-four years ago the Bulgarian capital—now one of the most progressive cities in Europe : the centre of a literary culture no less than of commerce and politics—was a sordid little village, exactly like any one of the miserable Macedonian hamlets, in which, until the beginning of the war of liberation, their *rayah* inhabitants skulked in fear of the *Bashi-bazouk.* What might not Salonika, Serres, Monastir, Uskub have been in 1912, if the treaty makers in 1878 had not abandoned Macedonia to the Turks ! Race jealousies in Macedonia and Albania are assuaged. Arnauts, and other Albanians, in their thousands, have joined the invaders' ranks, or laid down their arms and returned peacefully to the villages which their deliverers had already begun to administer. The question of race distribution in Macedonia is easily settled. It is admitted that Servian Slavs predominate in the north-west, Greeks in the south, Bulgarian Slavs in the north, north-east, and centre. Of the two millions of Macedonia, a country about two-thirds the size of Scotland, a million are Bulgarian Slavic. Nor need the Turkish villagers and townspeople migrate from Macedonia. In the Bulgarian kingdom, north of the Rhodope, there are half a million Turks, peaceable, amiable people, on a footing of equality with their Christian neighbours, quite content with their lot. Their schools are supported by the State. They have their Deputies in Parliament.

The Albanian position has been described in a foregoing page. It has been argued that if a portion of its Slavised, undefined north were assigned to Servia and Montenegro, and the Greek-speaking districts of the south to the Hellenic kingdom, there would remain a large, purely Albanian territory ripe for the status of an independent principality. The Albanians are intellectually assimilative to an exceptional degree. The Albanians of Southern Italy—descendants, chiefly, of refugees from the Turkish invasion—are among the most intelligent and industrious of Italian citizens. Francesco Crispi, one of Garibaldi's Thousand, and Prime Minister of Italy, was but one among many Italians of Albanian descent who had risen to honourable positions in the public service.

Behind all these particularist issues, there looms the Germano-Slav Question, not much talked about, but never forgotten; and now revived by the Balkanic war and the idea of a permanent Slavic Federation. But a few years ago the Bulgarians of the kingdom, and of Macedonia, would have welcomed a Turco-Slav Confederation of the Balkans. The Russian Minister, M. Isvolsky, gave his approval to the project. So, at one time, did the Macedonian revolutionist leaders Saraffof and Sandansky. But the most curious instance of this pro-Turkish attitude was the declaration made, two and a half years ago, to M. Ludovic Naudeau, one of the most distinguished of continental journalists, by General Paprikoff, the Bulgarian Foreign Minister. "Confederation," said the General, "is coming, and Turkey may be in it—may be at the head of it. Why not? Only, Turkey must in the first place reform herself?" General Paprikoff thought it not improbable that the Young Turks would create a progressive Turkey. It is interesting to note that the Turks are now credited with a desire to revive the project of a Turco-Slav Confederation.

Even now, with the Turkish Empire in Europe reduced

to the dimensions of an English county, something may be said in favour of a Turkish partnership in a Balkan Confederation. But only on the condition that the Headship, or Presidency, or whatever it might be, of the League would be Græco-Slavic. In Adrianople—city and district—two-thirds of the population are Bulgarian. In a Confederation of which Turkey was a member, they would be fairly secure against maltreatment, for Turkey herself would be supervised. The centuries' strife between them and their Turkish neighbours would vanish for ever, as it has long since done between Christian and Mahometan in the Bulgarian kingdom. To restore Adrianople to the uncontrolled sway of the Turks would be to abandon its Christian population to the fate which befell Macedonia in 1878. As we have pointed out in a previous page, the liberation of Slavic Thrace was part of the revolutionary programme.

It is a well grounded surmise that a strong Confederation of the Balkans would minimise the risks of the long predicted conflict between "The Slav and the Teuton." Not for the first time has the cession of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austria in 1878 been interpreted as the erection of a Teutonic barrier against the Slav. Aksakoff, the father of Panslavism, denounced the transaction as an "insult to Russia," "a present of a fool's cap and bells instead of a wreath of victory." We may recall the words of General Skobeleff, the conqueror of Transcaucasia, and hero of the Russo-Turkish war: "We are the victims of a foreigner's intrigue. Do you know who he is? It is the German. Never forget it. Our enemy is the German. The battle between the German and the Slav is inevitable. It will be long, bloody, and terrible, but the Slav will triumph." These words were addressed to an assembly of Servians in Paris. "If we want Constantinople, we shall not take the Danubian route. We shall march through Asia Minor." These were Prince Dondoukoff-Korsakoff's words, gaily, care-

lessly uttered, in his Viceregal palace at Tiflis, five years after the Russo-Turkish war, in a conversation with the present writer, who, a few days earlier, had heard exactly the same hypothetical resolution expressed by General Grossmann, then Governor of Kars. But Asia Minor is now—" economically "—the " Teuton's " promised land. Russian officers in those days were smarting under their diplomatic defeat. In a historico-poetical work of his, King Nicolas of Montenegro invites the Croats to join with their Serb and Bulgar kindred in a Balkan League. But the Croats are in Austria. In *The Fortnightly Review* for December 1912 the well-known writer " Politicus," in his article, "The Eastern Question and European War," predicts the outbreak of a " great war " between the Slav and the German. Of the forty-five millions in the Dual Monarchy twenty-two millions are Slavs.

CHAPTER XII

COMMONPLACE though it may have seemed to ordinary mortals busied over their daily avocations, the first meeting of the Balkan Delegates in St. James's Palace, on the 16th December 1912, was, of all the deeds the sun looked down upon that day, the most significant for the weal or woe of Europe. But few of the English kings whose portraits adorn the walls of the apartment wherein the Conference now sits, had themselves been concerned in any transaction as interesting and momentous as that in which the Græco-Slav envoys are now engaged. Charles II, the genial cynic, whose image looks down upon them, might smile with surprise as they dipped their pens in those huge,

wonderful—and, as the connoisseurs say—"priceless" silver inkstands, "six of them," which he made a present of to his Privy Councillors. Strange use of his Majesty's inkstands—the liquidation of the Turk's possessions. The sacrosanct Grand Turk of the Caroline epoch dwarfed into a constitutional official manipulated puppet-wise by a parliamentary majority: and an empire that, on the European mainland alone, was as large as four Great Britains, now dwindled to the dimensions of Yorkshire, and threatened with further diminution to the size of a little Scotch Clackmannan. The portrait of the Monarch—Edward VII—whose plans for Macedonian reform the Young Turks defeated by the very revolution which has ruined the Ottoman Empire in Europe, is unfinished. It is hoped it may be in its place, among the kings of England, gazing benignly on the liquidators, before their business is over.

Of this business, the principal subjects are the new Turkish boundary, the Greek islands, and Albania. Turkey's possession of the islands never has been more than nominal, never meant more than extortion of "tribute." The purest descendants of the ancient race live in these "Isles of Greece," of which Byron sang in his most moving verse, and which the piratical Turk drenched in the blood of their people. As to the new boundary, either the surrender of Adrianople and its district, or resumption of war, is the alternative with which M. Daneff, the Bulgarian deputy, begins his negotiations. It should be remembered that, but for Czar Ferdinand's humanity, Adrianople would have been captured long ago. The prospect of a bombardment horrified him. "Magnificent!" remarked a military critic of high repute; "but it is not war." Perhaps not. But civilisation will applaud Czar Ferdinand's forbearance. Imagine, if you can, what the Turk would have done—or in the past had often done—with a besieged town at his mercy.

Adrianople being mostly Bulgarian, its restoration to the Turk's uncontrolled sway would mean another Eastern Question, none the less dangerous and detestable if raised over the lilliputian fragment of an empire. Only in annexation to Bulgaria may the Thracian city hope for salvation, and the South-East escape the misery of another war: unless, as we have already suggested, Turkey's entry into the Balkan Federation should supply the guarantee for the good government of the town and territory. But the ideal solution would be expulsion, "bag and baggage," to Von der Goltz's Iconium, and the conversion of Golden Byzantium into a free city. Even in Constantinople the Turks are a minority. So that, unless they are willing to become equalitarian citizens, they must continue the Hamidian Young Turk policy of rule by brute force. "By the beard of the Prophet, we are lost," exclaimed the Old Turk ex-Minister of War when he heard of "our giaour constitution." Even now, while the liquidators are dipping their pens in King Charles's inkpots, there come rumours of designs for the deposition of the phantom Caliph, and the formation of a Shefket-Nazim-Izzet triumvirate for the prosecution of the war. The best course for the Turk would be to return to his Anatolian homeland, and there adopt the career laid down for him in the "political testament" of Ali Pasha the Wise: "Let us Musalmans imitate the Christians and devote ourselves to agriculture, commerce, industry, and the arts. Let us set to work. Then only shall we find salvation." In the homeland the Turk could, surely, count upon the support of the German Chancellor, whose economic cure we have already recorded.

The project of an independent Albania is principally backed by the firebrand mandarinate of Vienna, who would stifle Servia, by shutting her off from an Austrian lake known as the Adriatic, and checkmate the newborn Slavic power, whose astonishing feat has sent a

fraternal thrill through the twenty-two million Slavs of Austria-Hungary. There are parallelisms between the Austrian situation and the Turkish. In two-thirds of the Austrian dominion the Austrian is a stranger. An enforcement, in the dual monarchy, of the principle of nationality which Vienna advocates for Albania, would destroy the empire of the Hapsburgs. Isolation of its subject races, repression of their instinct for self-realisation, have been the condition of Hapsburg supremacy. The portion of the Austro-Hungarian frontier most exposed to invasion faces Servia. And there are five million Serbs on the Austrian side of the Danube. And Servia, her ancient valour recovered, is a member of the new and powerful league which in the next twenty-five years will count between thirty and forty million inhabitants—nearly all Slavic—of kin with another Slavic race numbering a hundred and sixty millions, and increasing by millions every year. Such is the problem of "the Slav and the Teuton" as it presents itself to the Count Conrad von Hötzendorffs of Vienna. All these Durazzo wranglings, all this strife between Albanian independents and Albanian absorptionists, are but the prelude to another and greater readjustment of the nations.

The readjustment may be achieved without slaughter. As the *Times* has just said, failure so to achieve it will be "an indelible stain upon civilisation." At his reception of certain members of the Upper House yesterday, the Emperor Francis expressed his opinion that it will be attained peacefully. The Statesman, with whose moralisings upon the "grim, raw races" we have introduced this little book, wondered what would happen to the rusty, lumbering, old "Clock" when its leaden weight (Austria) should stop. The "grim, raw races" and their Greek friends are answering the question. A solid Balkanic League can keep the ancient timepiece going. Great as is their gratitude to their Russian "liberators" in the past, the

Slavs of the Balkans mean to lead their own lives, rule their destinies in their own way. They cherish no thought of war between "the Slav and the Teuton." Their ideal is a peaceful union of peoples, free, progressive, and unaggressive. They have dissipated the once universal delusion that the Slav was too submissive, mild, dreamy for the practice of self-government. Bulgaria is a model of free, vigorously efficient administration. The "grim, raw races" have introduced into internationalism a moral element.

The rise of the Balkanic League coincides with a change in the popular idea of war and of political "interests." If the war spirit still survived, unmitigated, the rise of a new Slav Power in the Balkans might, quite naturally, alarm its Teutonic neighbours, even though nothing in any degree resembling the Slavic "Bloc" in the Balkans exists in Austria-Hungary.

It has not survived. The Anglo-Russian North Sea incident, settled peacefully by a European Conference assembled at the Quai d'Orsay, would in an earlier age have plunged nations into war. The Jenkins's ear epoch is dead and gone. The Eastern Question has become an economic question, amenable to settlement without slaughter. Economic progress, advance in all the arts of peace, is the set purpose of the Balkanic States. The more compact their union, the better for the world's peace. The very war they have waged was a war for peace: unlike every war on record, it has been approved, as a just war, by the civilised world. Together with the war spirit, the idea of "interests" is undergoing a total transformation. During the period of the Eastern Question ending with the Crimean War, British "interests" meant the exclusion, on purely political grounds, of Russian and French influence in the Turkish East, and the maintenance of Turkish "integrity" at the cost of untold sufferings to

the Christian populations. "Integrity," pure and simple, was Lord Palmerston's "absolute dogma." And Palmerston was the incarnation of the English spirit. But the idea of "interests" is being humanised. The greatest interest is justice.

At the Conference of Saturday, 28th December, the Turkish delegates claimed the city and province of Adrianople, the Ægean islands, Albanian autonomy under an Ottoman Prince, and Macedonian self-government under a nominee of the Sultan's. The Allies' terms were surrender of the islands, and of all Thrace, except Constantinople and its suburbs. Those who knew the Turk best were the least surprised at the insolence of his claim to a country from which he had just been expelled, and in which for five hundred years he had played the part of robber and murderer. The Turks' terms were promptly rejected. And, of course, reference to Constantinople—the familiar, dilatory trick—was repeated. Every "good European" must regret that the Bulgarians, by halting at Chorlu, lost their opportunity to clear the Turk off his last foothold on this continent—leaving it to the Powers to determine the international position of Constantinople and the Dardanelles. Freeman's sarcasm on the Turk in the judge's chair instead of the criminal's dock will recur to many a reader. To restore any portion of the conquered territory to the Turk would be to subject its Christian inhabitants to the fate that befell the Macedonians in 1878. In which case, a Czar Ferdinand would once more appeal to his subjects (and to Europe) to "obtain a bearable life for our brothers beyond the frontier." From trustworthy testimony published in the London press, we learn that, while the delegates have been bargaining in St. James's, the Turkish troops from Asia Minor (including the self-named "Butcher Regiment" of the Adana massacre) have been pillaging and slaughtering among the Christian villages of Gallipoli

peninsula. Gallipoli being claimed by the Turks, it is surmised that the "Butchers" and their Kurdish comrades, by exterminating the Christians, have been making room for a Moslem immigration. And while the bargainings are going on, the Kurds in Asiatic Turkey are astir, and the Austrian idea of a South Slavonic Empire (of which the heir to the throne of the Hapsburgs is the recognised exponent) is revived in Vienna. New vistas of the Eastern Question are opening up.

The Allied States, however, have done their part. But they have done it, only because they have been able to supply the Might for which Right has been waiting all these centuries of Turkish crime. Justice—humanity—"a bearable life," unattainable without brute force: a grim fact, with lessons for others besides the Balkan States. That expression of Czar Ferdinand's, "a bearable life," strikes a new note in international polity. And the rising of the Slavs and the Greeks, for the liberation of the enslaved, is a unique phenomenon in the history of mankind. It has had nothing in common with the neurotic enthusiasms of uninstructed mobs (well or ill dressed) in certain countries during a "popular" war. To every Serb, Bulgar, Montenegrin, Hellene, it was a sacred obligation—no matter at what cost in self-sacrifice. The liberation of Macedonia and Thrace is the League's New Year gift to the Europe of a new era.

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